

People of the Tujia ethnic minority refer to themselves as “offspring of the white tiger.”

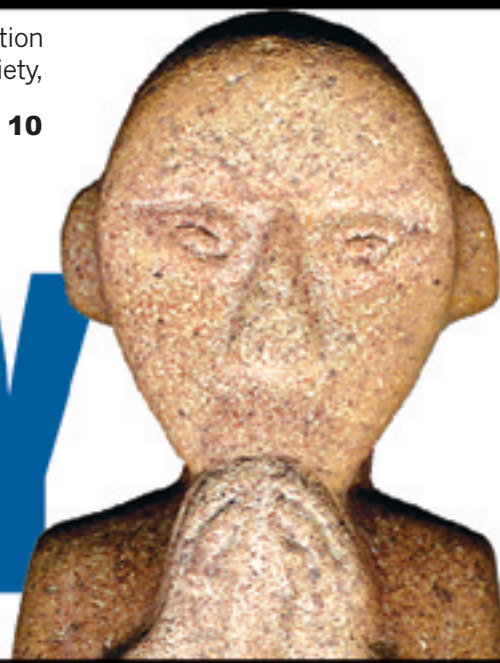
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Some will miss the glorious days of Ghost Street, but the less nostalgic may find it a better place to eat than ever. Page 14



These ancestors of the Chinese nation created primitive forms of society, religion, music and even writing. Page 10



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By Nie Zhiyang

As a consequence of an ongoing labor shortage in some of China's coastal economically developed provinces, large numbers of teenage students in Jiangxi Province were organized by their schools to work in factories as unskilled laborers. The rationale given was that they were “defraying tuition fees by work-for-study.”

These child laborers were welcomed by some private companies, as they were much easier to manage than ordinary workers. They were organized in batches by their schools, who charged a daily fee, and worked out even cheaper than the unskilled workers they replaced.

Every day, these child laborers had to work eleven to twelve hours, with no entertainment and inadequate sleep. Although the organizers of the scheme have been punished following exposure of the illegal practice by several national newspapers, the circumstances that motivated those schools to mistreat their students in such a manner, namely the severe shortage of unskilled workers, remains.

Man-power shortage

Several cities in south China's Guangdong Province, including Shenzhen, Zhuhai and Dongguan, have witnessed a shortage of manpower since last year, and “workers wanted” signs have become a common sight on the gates of numerous factories.

“After Spring Festival, we found it extremely hard to fill the planned number of low-level laborers,” complained a Mr. Hu, personnel manager at Weida Electrical Apparatus, a factory in Shenzhen, “We had vacancies for 100 positions, but the fact is, we can only fill two thirds of those places, or even less.”

He added, “In the past, once a ‘worker wanted’ sign was posted outside, there would be nearly ten times as many applicants as the number of positions. People would queue in line to compete for work, regardless of the working conditions and pay.”

Mr. Wu, owner of Jinjiang Shoe Co complained, “I have been waiting for one and a half months, but fewer than twenty people have shown interest in my advertisements for laborers. In order to fill those positions, I even went to Jiangxi, Henan and Sichuan, but it was just a waste of effort.” Such stories are increasingly common in the Pearl River Delta.

Few people would have predicted that migrant workers, ranking at the bottom of the urban ecosystem, would become so sought after that firms had to fight for the chance to employ them.

But now, in order to keep veteran workers and attract new comers, such phenomena has arisen as company managers travelling to their peasant workers' hometown to pay New Year's visits during Spring Festival and providing company buses to send off and meet workers when they go home or return.

Workers leave Guangdong

A recent report released by the Guangdong Province Statistics Bureau shows that the shortfall of workers is expected to exceed one million and is still growing, and it is increasingly difficult for some labor-intensive enterprise in the province to find sufficient low-cost laborers.

In Dongguan, the gap between demand and supply of common laborers has reached 300,000, accounting for one-third of the total, the mayor revealed during

Workers Wanted!

Some Chinese Cities are Facing the Unusual Phenomenon of Labor Shortage



‘These cases are warning us that the resource of cheap domestic labor is finite, and therefore also needs construction, cultivation and protection. For some enterprises or regional economies, an increase in labor costs is inevitable.’

a regular economic meeting in January.

The situation in the Yangtze Delta is better, but not much. There were only enough senior technical staff, technicians and skilled workers to fill 30 percent of the 1.2 million manufacturing positions, and in Shanghai alone, the shortage reached 30,000, according to a Yangtze Delta national high-level technical talents seminar held in January. Conversely, supplies of unskilled migrant workers in the region were adequate compared with its southern counterpart.

Perhaps the prime reason for this change is the fact that the income of low-level workers has not changed. In the past twenty years, the supply of migrant laborers greatly outnumbered the demand. “The employees had no choice, for there were many more people standing in line, waiting for a position to become vacant, and any little complaint was

grounds for being fired. Working conditions were bad and the pay was low and never changed,” said Hu, adding, “The average salary for those workers was 400 to 500 yuan per month in 2003 and 2004.”

In the Pearl River Delta, offering higher wages of 700 to 900 yuan as well as meal subsidies, Galanz Group is able to maintain a steadier supply of labor than other firms paying 400 to 500 yuan, like Weida.

Generally wages in the Pearl River Delta, 400 yuan at the lowest and averaging around 600 to 700 yuan, are lower than the average 600 to 1,000 yuan in the Yangtze Delta area, according to Mr. Hu from Shenzhen Weida and Mrs. Liu from Ningbo Fanguan Fan Making Co.

“We ask for nothing more but reasonable wages and conditions,” Miss Zhang, a 20-year old from Chongqing, commented. “I once worked in a garment

factory in Dongguan, earning 700 yuan per month, more than in previous years,” she said, “But some of my senior high school classmates who got work in Suzhou, informed me that the wages there were much higher than in Dongguan, around 1,000 per month. That is why I came to Suzhou after Spring Festival, and now I am working for a private electrical company earning 1,000 yuan. I can earn even more with overtime.”

Another factor is related to some old, and not so old, discriminatory restrictions. In the past, there were strict restrictions on the number of peasants entering the cities to work. But now, many of those regulations have been abolished.

“More humane and humanitarian policies have been put in place, such as granting equal citizenship, medical assistance, legal assistance and education opportunities for migrant worker's children,” said Li Jinhai, an official from the information department of Kunshan Municipal Party Committee.

Causes of shortage

Jiang Rifang, from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, suggested that the absolute number of migrant laborers has decreased

by 26.58 million between 1990 and 2002, also, the impact of family planning regulations has also had an effect on the sustainable provision of human resources.

“China's policies of developing the Western regions and redevelopment of the Northeast industrial bases, created more opportunities and alternatives in those regions. Policies aimed at reducing peasants' burdens has caused some of them to decide to stay home to work on their land,” said Cao Jinqing, a professor from East China University of Science and Technology.

Meanwhile gender and age limitations keep many potential workers out of the workforce, Cao pointed out. The general manager of a joint venture factory in Shenzhen, producing cellular phone parts, acknowledged that he prefers hiring female workers. His long-term technical staff is comprised of five men. But the 40 assembly-line workers are all women, whom he considers more careful and patient.

“The women don't make trouble,” Li says. “You hire men, or a lot of men, and they want to run around. They aren't reliable. They will steal.”

That is why women make up some 68 percent of the roughly

‘I have been waiting for one and a half months, but fewer than twenty people have shown interest in my advertisements for laborers. In order to fill those positions, I even went to Jiangxi, Henan and Sichuan, but it was just a waste of effort.’

20 million migrant workers in the Pearl River Delta area, and some experts say the current labor shortage is actually a female labor shortage – since women outnumber men in skilled trades, like electronics, garments and food processing and therefore the number of desperately needed women is also much greater than that of males.

Call for better conditions

An analysis prepared by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security states that the shortage mainly affects labor-intensive manufacturers and is most pronounced in the three advanced economic regions. Of these, the Pearl Delta is most significant in terms of regional distribution, with ventures with investment from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao or foreign countries.

These conclusions are supported by research carried out by the municipal government of Zhuhai, which highlighted two features: in female workers from gender; in low-fee-demand workers from proper pay and in common workers from category of works.

Another expert from the Academy of Social Sciences, Lu Xueyi, pointed out that there is by no means a national labor shortage today, however it cannot be denied that regional and industry specific scarcity exists.

“These cases are warning us that the resource of cheap domestic labor is finite, and therefore also needs construction, cultivation and protection. For some enterprises or regional economies, an increase in labor costs is inevitable,” Lu said.

He added, “Although some Taiwanese and foreign funded factories have moved their operations to Southeast Asia or India, seeking cheaper labor, local governments shouldn't focus simply on bringing down labor costs. If you look at labor costs only, China is not cheaper than some countries of Southeast Asia. But the investment environment, industrial set-up and government management costs are all factors in the overall cost of investment. Some labor costs were too low in the past, the present market change is a kind of normal phenomenon.”

“If a local government wants to attract migrant workers, they should focus their endeavors on creating an attractive environment for them, including education for their children, treatment, and so on” said one of Lu's colleagues.

“The local government can't just create an attractive environment for the development of enterprises, otherwise migrant workers will not come, and the enterprises will have no choice but to move to a place where they can find cheap labor. In addition, communication between labor exporting and importing provinces should be strengthened to allow the market to function more smoothly.”

As a final proposition, Lu said, “A further action should be taken to abolish discriminatory regulations and unreasonable charges on migrant workers in urban areas, so as to remove obstacles and allow the market to lead the stream of labor to reach optimum distribution.”

Only in this way can such cases as school children being conscripted to work in factories be avoided and a natural relationship be established between management and the workforce.

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Shanghai Tightens Real Estate Market

By Annie Wei

Following publication of a State Council notice on promoting the healthy development of the real estate market, the Shanghai municipal government has taken a series of measures to reign in its booming real estate market. On Sunday, the Shanghai Municipal Committee and Shanghai Municipal People's Government jointly released a document on strengthening the real estate market.

According to the document, the government will take measures to ensure that more middle or low price apartments are available to ordinary income families, and the government will further formulate investment rules for the real estate business and restrain market speculation by means of taxation, finance and legalization.

The document also points out that the government aims to maintain a stable real estate market, expand the

level of housing supply and decrease housing prices.

Of the 9 million square meters of land zoned for housing construction in 2005, the document requires that middle or low priced apartments should account for 65 percent.

To encourage more middle and low-income families to purchase apartments, the Shanghai government is increasing its upper limits on relevant subsidies.

In China's real estate market, the

cost of an apartment is based on the price per square meter of its total area. Under Shanghai's current subsidies policy, any middle or low-income family buying an apartment of which the price is less than 3,500 yuan per square meter, or the total price is less than 250,000 yuan, is eligible for government subsidy for their monthly loan repayments. This policy was implemented on June 1, 2003.

Under the new policy, the upper limits have been increased to 4,500 yuan per square meter or a total price of less than 330,000 yuan.

At the same time, any individual who buys an apartment and tries to sell it without having lived in it for a full year will be required to pay sales and other taxes, such as city construction tax. Sales tax is 5 percent of the difference between the original price and selling price. The sales tax requirement will be implemented from this Monday.



Australian trade minister Mark Vaile

Photo by Hu Jinxi

Australia and China Seek to Finalize FTA Feasibility Study

By Chu Meng

Australian trade minister Mark Vaile met with China's minister of commerce Bo Xilai in Beijing this Wednesday for talks aimed at finalizing the Australia-China Free Trade Agreement (FTA) Joint Feasibility Study.

Speaking at a press conference Thursday, Vaile said he believes an Australia-China FTA will help secure long-term economic relations between the two countries, providing better access to the highly competitive Chinese market. The joint feasibility study, announced as part of the Trade and Economic Framework signed by Australia and China in October 2003, was due for completion by March this year.

The Australian minister expressed that the study covers goods, services, investment and other issues, such as intellectual property and transparency. Negotiation of an Australia-China FTA will only begin if the feasibility study now underway shows it to be a viable proposition and in the overall interests of the two countries.

"We could see a promising future from now on. For example, we have signed a cooperative pipeline construction agreement with China Ocean Aviation Group, which will be used to transit liquefied natural gas to China's Guangdong Province by the end of 2006," Vaile said.

Income Tax Unification to be Accelerated

By Nie Zhiyang

The State Administration of Taxation (SAT) is to accelerate the reform on unifying income tax for domestic and overseas firms.

Director of the SAT, Xie Xuren, announced the move at a press conference during the third session of the ongoing Tenth National People's Congress on Wednesday.

Xie said the changes would create a more equal environment for competition four years after China's entry into the WTO.

He pointed out that the administration, together with other departments, has carried out an in-depth research on a feasible and practicable tax system with unified rates for all business in line with the legislative procedure.

Foreign Invested Exports Hit 57 Percent

By Deng Minjie

Exports by foreign-invested enterprises in the domestic market hit \$338.6 billion in 2004, accounting for 57 percent of China's total exports, according to a report by the Ministry of Commerce published in the *Beijing Times* Monday.

Meanwhile, the level of exports and imports by foreign firms increased by 40.4 percent on 2003, to \$663.16 billion. Exports by the 100 top enterprises reached \$107.07 billion. Among these, 90 enterprises are in the IT sector.

The foreign investors in those enterprises that are joint ventures are mainly from the US, South Korea, Singapore, and the first 10 enterprises include Hong Fu Jing, Motorola (China) and Intel (Shanghai).

Land Use to be Strictly Controlled in Beijing

By Chu Meng

Beijing is to implement tighter land management regulations in an effort to avoid improper operation and blind investment, it was revealed at an Urban Planning and Management Workshop held by the Beijing Municipal Commission of Urban Planning last Friday.

Under the new regulations, which will be released at the end this month, development zones established contrary to the related guidelines will be revoked. Meanwhile, the government will take charge of land regulation and control prior to its development by first-level developers. The development process will also be strictly divided between first-level and second-level developers.

Experts said that separating first and second level developers was important for governmental management and control of land for commercial use. Under the new method, a first-level development is not allowed to be transformed directly into a second-level one; Instead, the developer must participate in an open bid process. The measure is expected to significantly curb illegal deals and investments.

It was also emphasized that no effort would be spared to protect existing urban land while working to improve the efficiency of land use in industrial and commercial projects, and land misappropriated for other purposes will be restored.



Products made in Zhejiang, such as this all-terrain vehicle manufactured by Qianjiang Group, have attracted considerable interest from commercial delegations from Latin American at a promotion in the city of Taizhou.

Xinhua Photo

State to Ban Medical Advertising

By Lin Chenxi/Jia Ting

Deputy Minister of Health Gao Qiang announced Monday that China will ban medical advertising, according to a *Beijing Youth Daily* report.

Gao made the announcement during a discussion with members of the National Committee of the CPPCC on medicine and public health.

Gao pointed out that the reputation of hospitals would deteriorate if their only purpose was to attract more business and increase profits through advertising, and there was a possibility that false advertisements might mislead or even result in harm to patients.

"The Ministry of Health has deliberated about the method of canceling medical advertising," he was quoted as saying in the article, "Departments in the area of public health will no longer be responsible for appraising medical information or certificating permits for any medical advertisements."

The ministry has already submitted draft proposals for legislation on the issue to the State Council, the report stated. Vice director of the State Administration for Industry and Commerce, Liu Yuting, expressed his support for the plan. According to Liu, from 2001 to 2004, more than 70,000 illegal pharmaceutical and medical advertising cases have been investigated and punished.

CPPCC member Wang Xudong from the Nanjing University of Traditional Chinese Medicine suggested three key factors behind the large number of false medical advertisements. First, hospitals can make large profits through advertising. Second, the media broadcasting such advertisements can also profit substantially. Third, the workforce of the departments enforcing existing laws is relatively ineffective.

No Hike Imminent in RMB Rate

By Chu Meng

There is no necessity to raise the current renminbi rate and banking deposit rate as a result of the recent decline in value of the US dollar, director of the State Administration of Foreign Exchange (SAFE) Guo Shuqing said in an interview with *Beijing Youth Daily* Saturday.

China will maintain the current foreign-exchange system, but will allow the market to play an increasingly larger role in determining the renminbi's rate, said Guo.

"The fall in value of the US dollar has exerted certain influence on China's foreign exchange reserve. However, foreign exchange reserves in any currency all carry a certain degree of risk, because they represent a long-term operation. Depending on a fixed and standard system, we only

adjust the structure of the reserve through importing and exporting, investment and foreign debt, but will not do it in a random way," Guo said.

He added that the interbank foreign exchange market is the platform that determines the renminbi's rate. To improve the function of the market is an important part of the foreign exchange system's reform. The renminbi currently trades in a narrow band against the dollar, however the yuan's exchange rate will be allowed increasing flexibility as the country reforms its exchange-rate system. "The reform will be a complex, gradual process. It must be pushed forward in a steady manner," Guo said.

Meanwhile, capital injection and bringing in strategic investors are among options for China's financial authorities in their attempt to recapitalize the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC), Guo said on the sidelines of the National Committee of the CPPCC meeting Sunday.

"Using part of the country's hefty foreign exchange reserves to fund an ICBC capital infusion would be an appropriate method. It can protect big financial institutions from system risks, which have been admitted world wide," he said.

Referring to hot money invested in domestic real estate by leading financial management companies, such as Morgan Stanley and Merrill Lynch, Guo commented, "Because of China's foreign exchange control system, foreign hot money would encounter a series of frustrations in the course of flowing in and out of the country. Therefore, they would realize only small profits."

Heinz Recalls Suspect Sauces

By Pan Hao

International food manufacturer Heinz has issued a national recall of its chilli sauces and chilli oils that may contain the red industrial dye, Sudan I, the Ministry of Health announced last Thursday.

The recall follows news of fast food giant McDonald's withdrawing some products in Britain after the dye, believed to cause cancer, was found in some food products.

"Heinz has told its distributors and sales agencies across the coun-

try to recall the suspected products," said Charles Chyi, regional president of Heinz (China) Investment Co.

Heinz provided a list of products that must be recalled on the Chinese mainland and has given it to its distributors and wholesalers, Chyi added, however he refused to reveal exactly how many products would be recalled nationwide because of the carcinogen.

According to a local quality supervision department, six products produced by Heinz companies are suspected of containing Sudan I.

Notice Clarifies Media Joint Venture Rules

By Annie Wei

The State Administration of Radio, Film and Television (SARFT) released a notice on the management of broadcast and film production joint venture last Friday. New management methods for broadcast and film production joint ventures were implemented on November 28 last year.

According to the notice, the foreign investor of a joint venture company

must be a professional production institute or company in the broadcasting, TV or film industry. The same applies to the domestic partner in the joint venture, however local TV stations and radio stations are not permitted to establish joint venture companies yet.

A foreign investor who has set up a production joint venture or has received approval to do so by SARFT may not apply to set up a second

joint venture production company.

The notice also states that any investor, foreign or local, seeking to set up a joint venture production company in China should have maintained a good business record for at least three years.

The notice further requires that two-thirds of the material produced by the joint venture company every year should be about or related to China.

US Completes Review of Lenovo-IBM Deal

By Sun Yongjian

US-based IBM and China's leading personal computer maker Lenovo on Wednesday jointly announced the review of a proposed deal between them by the Committee on Foreign Investment in the US had been completed. That step should clear the way for the sale of IBM's personal computing division to Lenovo.

Lenovo signed a deal to buy IBM's personal computing arm for \$1.25

billion on December 7, 2004, but the contract had been under scheduled investigation by US authorities since the end of January, as *Beijing Today* reported on January 28.

"With the review by the US government complete, IBM and Lenovo are moving quickly to integrate the two companies and expect to finalize the transaction in the second quarter, as planned, while continuing to provide customers with world-

class PC products and services," said Steve Ward, currently a senior vice president at IBM and general manager of IBM's Personal Systems Group, who will serve as Lenovo's new CEO, according to the Wednesday news release.

Earlier this month, Lenovo announced a new leadership group comprised of sitting Lenovo senior executives and people from IBM. A recent survey of more than 4,000

IBM customers showed that more than 90 percent were favorably disposed towards Lenovo and the transaction in general, the release said.

As part of the strategic business alliance between IBM and Lenovo, IBM would provide sales support and demand generation services for Lenovo products through IBM's existing enterprise sales force of approximately 30,000 professionals, and through IBM.com, it said.

Shanda CEO Resurfaces after Sina Bid

By Wang Shuang

Chen Tianqiao, president and CEO of prominent Chinese online gaming firm Shanda went public for the first time since his company quietly bought a majority share in top Chinese Internet portal Sina in an interview with *Beijing Times* on March 3.

But Chen said he could not disclose any definitive information on the deal, which has fueled all kinds of speculation among market analysts and domestic high-tech industry insiders.

"I have been very impressed by Sina's success in operation and cultivating a good image among Internet users. I have invested most of my money into Sina, so you can see nobody thinks higher of the company than I do," Chen was quoted as saying.

When Shanda became the largest single shareholder of Sina, many analysts speculated the gaming firm would pursue a merger with the portal to form a single unit.

Asked about the pos-

sibility of a merger, Chen answered, "I can't answer a concrete question like that right now, but I can tell you that in all of Shanda's merger deals, it is our principle to keep the purchased companies independent."

He did say Shanda and Sina would definitely cooperate by some means and his company's becoming a Sina shareholder was just one important step forward in a larger corporate strategy.

Chen explained Shanda's strong sales channel, made up of 170,000 terminal chain stores, 135,000 Internet cafes and a solid online payment platform used by 20,000 people a day, could help to popularize Sina products such as email accounts and music purchase services.

When asked whether Sina's top brass would stay in the event of a merger, Chen responded, "The true cost in a merger or acquisition is a company's valued experts. Why would I want to operate by myself?"

China Aviation Oil Contests Judicial Petition

By Sun Yongjian

China Aviation Oil (Singapore) Corp. (CAO) announced on its Web site on Monday that it was seeking legal advice on dismissing or staying a judicial management position filed in the Singapore High Court.

The petition, served to CAO on March 4, was filed by SK Energy Asia, a subsidiary of South Korea-based SK Corp., making it the second creditor to file a petition against CAO after Japan-based Sumitomo Mitsui Banking, which demanded a payment \$26.36 million from the company at the end of January, according to a report in the Singapore-based *Lianhe Zaobao* newspaper on February 23.

The statement stressed that judicial management would lead to CAO's liquidation, rather than "benefit debt negotiations," and therefore would not be in the interest of any shareholder.

In late January, CAO revealed its own restructuring scheme to handle

\$550 million in debts accrued from speculative oil derivative trading. In its recent statement, the company said its proposed scheme of debt restructuring was the best way forward for creditors and shareholders.

That scheme called for \$100 million in upfront cash payments, comprising \$70 million from fresh equity and \$30 million from existing assets to cover liabilities, while another \$120 million of the company's total debts would be paid annually over a period of eight years and come from CAO's operational cash flow, dividends from investment shareholdings and the sale of assets, it said.

Overseas investment banks Deutsche Bank and Merrill Lynch were ready to purchase 40 percent and 32 percent creditor's rights from CAO for cash, *China Business News* said on Wednesday.

CAO spokesman Gerald Woon declined to comment on that report when contacted by *Beijing Today*.



On Wednesday, Siemens held a foundation-laying ceremony for its new 550-million-yuan production facility in the Tianjin High-tech Industry Zone.

Xinhua Photo

Hisense-Siemens Trademark Dispute Resolved

By Sun Yongjian

The over-five-year long dispute between Germany-based Siemens and domestic appliance maker Hisense Group finally reached a settlement last Saturday. The two companies released a statement in Beijing announcing a Siemens affiliate would transfer the trademark "HiSense" registered in Germany and other EU countries to Hisense Group, Xinhua reported on Wednesday.

Zhu Shugin, an executive in the president's office at Hisense confirmed the news to *Beijing Today* on Wednesday. But Wang Junyan, a media specialist at

Siemens China said the same day that she had not heard about the move.

Hisense Group registered the HiSense trademark with the Qingdao Administration of Industry and Commerce in April 1993 and then changed the mark to Hisense in 2000, company Vice President Guo Qingcun said last September.

The Hisense mark was widely recognized among domestic consumers and was honored by the State Administration for Industry and Commerce as a famous trademark in 1999, Guo said. The group later registered the trademark in more than 40 countries in

Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe and Oceania, he added.

But the company later discovered the HiSense trademark had been registered in Germany by Bosch und Siemens Hausgerate GmbH (BSH) without expressed authorization, Guo said.

"BSH is an affiliate of Siemens in which both Siemens and Bosch hold equal 50 percent stakes," Wang told *Beijing Today* last September.

"BSH registered the trademark HiSense in Germany in 1999 as one of the Hi series of trademarks it has used for many years. There are many other brands in the Hi family such as HiNet and HiCom. If the trademark Hisense was used in the European market by any other company, it would be a violation of BSH's copyright," he added.

Haier Group Lists in HK

By Chu Meng

Haier Group has finally succeeded in listing in Hong Kong after its former holding company Haier-CCT changed its name on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange to Haier Electronics, *Beijing Youth Daily* reported Saturday.

The completion of the deal on Friday reshuffled the shareholding structure of Haier-CCT, with Haier replacing CCT Telecom Holdings as the controlling shareholder in the Hong Kong company. Haier's stake in Haier-CCT will increase to 57.3 percent following a new share issue and reach 60.7 percent after the full conversion of bonds into new shares.

The deal was set in motion when Haier-CCT Holdings bought Haier Group's washing machine business and its stake in a mobile handset joint venture for a total

consideration of about HK\$1.50 billion.

"The news drove down Haier CCT shares in a market that was rising, so investors have made profits since the shares have gone back up by a lot," Yin Guohong, research director at China Securities told *Beijing Today*.

Yang Mianmian, the new chairman of Haier Electronics and former president of Haier Group said in a statement released last Friday, "Haier-CCT intends to become the listed flagship of Haier Group in the research, development, manufacturing and selling of white goods. Looking ahead, we intend to inject our remaining white goods businesses into Haier-CCT."

Those remaining businesses included electronic home appliances and its interests in domestic A share-listed assets currently traded on the Shanghai stock exchange, Yang added.

Siemens Enters Race for High Speed Rail

By Sun Yongjian

China's ambitious plans to expand and improve its railway network has been drawing the interest of industry leaders from around the world.

Germany's Siemens, long active in the China market, is one of the firms pressing for a large share of the rail updating project.

"Siemens is ready to transfer express railway technology to China," the company said in a statement released last Friday, *Beijing Morning Post* reported on Monday.

Wang Junyan, media specialist for corporate communications at Siemens China confirmed the move to *Beijing Today* on Tuesday. "Siemens is a specialist in technologies such as maglev and wheel on rail lines," Wang said.

Canada's Bombardier Transportation Co. also said it wanted

to enter the fray last Thursday when China's Ministry of Railways announced that construction of an express railway linking Beijing and Tianjin capable of hitting speeds of 200 kilometers per hour was set to begin.

Although the Beijing-Tianjin express railway would only be 115 kilometers long, the winner of bidding for the project should enjoy preference in tenders for the much bigger project to link Beijing and Shanghai by a 1,300-kilometer high speed rail, *Beijing Morning Post* reported.

Which companies can compete in bidding for the line is up to the railway ministry and the Ministry of Science and Technology. Aside from Siemens and Bombardier, other firms clamoring to be in the running included Japan-based Kawasaki and France's Alstom, Wang told *Beijing Today*.

Generali China Life Scores Big Deal with CNPC

By Qiu Jiaoning

Generali China Life, a 50-50 joint venture between Italy-based Assicurazioni Generali and China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), has reached a contract for a single non-recurrent premium worth nearly \$2.4 billion with the domestic oil major, *Beijing News* reported Saturday.

Generali China Life would provide a retirement scheme paying out lifetime immediate annuities to 390,000 former CNPC employees, the newspaper said.

The deal could be ranked as one of the single largest immediate annuity contracts in the world.

"I wish to highlight that, in spite of the

premium being absolutely exceptional, both in terms of size and of its non-recurrent nature, the result achieved paves the way for the development of Generali China Life in the group insurance sector in China," Generali CEO Sergio Balbinot said in a statement last week.

Generali China Life, which has been active in China since 2002 and currently operates in the three cities of Beijing, Guangzhou and Foshan, is positioning itself to be among the top four life insurance giants in China. In 2004, the domestic life insurance industry generated a total premium volume of \$39 billion, about \$1.1 billion of which was collected by foreign joint ventures.

Thai Air Asia Becomes First Cheap Carrier to Enter China

By Deng Minjie

Malaysia-based Thai Air Asia Co. has received approval from the Civil Aviation Administration of China to offer flight services from Bangkok in Thailand to Chinese cities Xiamen, Chengdu and Kunming.

The move makes Thai Air Asia the first low-cost foreign airline to extend its operations into the China market, Zhong Ning, director of the aviation administration's media department told *Beijing Today* on Monday.

Thai Air Asia, a joint venture of Malaysia-based Air Asia and Thailand-based Shin Corp., will make its first China flight in April, from Bangkok to Xiamen, Fujian Province. Airline industry analysts have speculated fares could be around 30 percent to 60 percent

standard charges.

"On March 17 we will announce the definite date of the airline's first flight to China and publicize the fares," Liu Fanchou, an official from Xiamen International Airport Group Co. said on Tuesday.

"Low-fare flights should not only bring large benefits to customers, but also strengthen Xiamen's position as a transportation hub of southeast China," Liu added.

Other Southeast Asian low-fare carriers have been trying to break into the China market. Singapore-based JetStar Asia Airways and Valair applied for flight approval last year, but an official from the Civil Aviation Administration of China said their applications were still being reviewed.

Chery One Step Closer to US Market

By Wang Shuang

Chinese automaker SAIC-Chery Automobile Co. has chosen Visionary Vehicles to be its strategic partner in the North American market. US-based Visionary Vehicles announced last month it would establish a sales network of 250 dealers to introduce more than 20 Chery vehicles, including entry-level and mid-level cars, sedans and SUVs, with the aim of selling more than one million units by the end of this decade.

Visionary Vehicles founder and CEO Malcolm Bricklin explained his company's plan to *China Business News* on March 4, explaining

that dealers in the US would be able to pocket 15 percent of the income from sales of Chery cars, higher than the 10 percent commission more common in the auto sales sector.

Chery cars exported to North America would be priced about 30 percent lower than competing models made in Europe, Bricklin said. He predicted sales at each of the 250 dealers to surpass 4,000 vehicles a year.

"Through our price advantages, high-quality automobiles and pioneering sales network, Visionary Vehicles will change the auto sales pattern in the North American market," Bricklin was quoted as saying.

HK's Tai Fook Aims at Mainland Joint Futures Firm

By Sun Yongjian

Hong Kong Stock Exchange-listed Tai Fook Securities Group will start a new joint futures firm in the Chinese mainland, *China Business News* reported on Monday.

Wong Shiuhei, chief managing director at Tai Fook, confirmed the news to *Beijing Today* by telephone on Wednesday.

"We are trying to join the first group to get approval from authorities to start a joint futures firm in the Chinese mainland. But we are not sure when we will get

approval," Wong said.

"The firm will start with registered capital of 30 million yuan in line with China's regulations. We have reached a co-operational intent agreement with a mainland partner," Wong said without providing further details.

Tai Fook was striving to enter the mainland futures industry due to the low registered capital threshold compared with other markets, he said.

Wong said Tai Food would want a 49 percent stake in any joint firm.

Brazil's CVRD Hikes Ore Price

Rio De Janeiro, February 28 (Reuters) – Brazilian iron ore mining giant CVRD on Monday said it reached a deal to hike prices by 71.5 percent for China's biggest steelmaker, Baosteel, the latest in a string of similar price hikes.

The deal with Baosteel is valid for 13 Chinese steel smelters and envisages deliveries of 35.4 million tonnes of fine iron ore between April 2005 and March 2006, Companhia Vale do Rio Doce (CVRD) said in a statement.

Baosteel had said last week the 71.5 percent price increase, already accepted by a range of other steel firms in Japan, Korea and Australia, was unfair and that it would seek a more acceptable price.

The increases for the shipping year starting April 1 reflect strong demand for iron ore from steel mills gearing up to exceed last year's record global output of 1.05 billion tonnes.

Baosteel's final acceptance reinforces analysts' view that top European steel producer Arcelor, which said it did not consider CVRD's price hike "a benchmark for 2005 contracts," should also give in sooner or later and accept the increase.

CVRD's director of investor relations, Roberto Castello-Branco, said he expected iron ore prices

to continue upward. China's demand for commodities had established a new paradigm in the global economy and for iron ore prices, he said.

China, the world's top producer and consumer of steel, is also the largest importer of iron ore. In 2004, it imported 208 million tonnes, up 40.5 percent year-on-year.

Castello-Branco said iron ore was currently acting like a mid-cycle commodity with further room for growth.

World iron ore imports are expected to rise 50 million tonnes to 650 million tonnes this year with China taking 250 million tonnes, up from 208 million tonnes in 2004.

Local Report:

Most of the iron ore that Baosteel uses depends on imports. As iron ore prices rise by 71.5 percent, its production costs may increase by about 3.3 billion yuan. However, Baosteel has raised the price of its products for the second quarter of 2005, which can offset the influence of the iron ore price hike. The annual profit of Baosteel will be decided by its list price for the latter half of the year and market variation in supply and demand.

Experts estimate that prices of steel products in the domestic market may increase by around 200 yuan per ton. Price increases by large steel enterprises recently are the result of market anticipation of the iron ore price hike, so large steel enterprises may retain their high profitability.

Although iron ore prices increased by 71.5 percent relative to 2004, this does not indicate an equivalent rise in production costs. Steel companies that produce high value-added products are expected to have greater capacity to withstand the strain. Japanese steel companies took the lead to reach agreements with iron ore price rises as Japan predicts that steel prices on the international market will remain favorable and that the market can accept the rising rate.

The sharp increase of iron ore prices is bound to have some negative impact on market relations between supply and demand in the future. For some small steel plants with meager profit, it will be extremely difficult. There is every probability that it will cause shrinkage in iron ore imports. In general, the price will come down if the iron ore market has an excess of supply over demand.

– **China Securities Journal, March 2, 2005**
(Qiu Jiaoning)

Boeing Fires CEO for Affair with Exec

Chicago, March 8 (AP)

– Boeing Co. CEO Harry Stonecipher, brought back from retirement 15 months ago to boost the aerospace manufacturer's tainted image, has been forced out because of a new ethics scandal involving an affair he had this year with a female company executive.

In a stunning announcement that left the exact circumstances behind the ouster unclear, Boeing said Monday the 68-year-old president and chief executive officer had resigned at the board's request a day earlier for improper behavior while carrying out the consensual relationship.

Chairman Lew Platt said the affair by itself did not violate the code of business conduct at the company, where a string of defense scandals has raised questions about the way Boeing obtains its lucrative contracts. But an internal investigation that started because of an employee's complaint discovered "some issues of poor judgment" involving Stonecipher, who is married.

Platt refused repeated requests to be more specific and did not identify the female executive, who he said remains with Boeing.

Chief financial officer James Bell, 56, will serve as acting CEO until a successor is found but is not a candidate for the permanent job, the company said.



Harry Stonecipher
CEO of Boeing

Noranda Makes Move on Falconbridge

Toronto, March 9 (Reuters) – Toronto-based Noranda Inc. made a bid on Wednesday for the 41 percent of subsidiary Falconbridge Ltd. that it doesn't own in a share-swap deal worth C\$3 billion (\$2.5 billion) that will create one of the world's largest base metals miners.

Simultaneously, Noranda said it expects that a proposal by state-owned China Minmetals to buy Noranda is dead. But Noranda said it is still eager to do business with the big trader at a time of feverish Chinese demand for raw materials.

"There is no expectation on our part that China Minmetals will be bidding for a major part of the company," said Derek Pannell, Noranda's chief executive, referring to the merged company, which will be called Noranda Falconbridge.

"They may want to buy a small part or have some type of offtake-type arrangements...but we are interested in working with them and building those relationships," he said in a conference call.

Yahoo Sees End to MSN Deal

March 7 (Adweek) – Yahoo expects to lose its search-advertising deal with MSN, company executives said last week, as Microsoft looks to tap into the lucrative search market.

Ted Meisel, head of Yahoo's Overture Services division, told Adweek that MSN's commitment to search probably means that it will build its own search-ad platform. Overture, Yahoo's search-advertising unit has a paid listings distribution deal with MSN through June 2006. MSN has declined to discuss any plans in paid search.

"The right thing for us to do, as a business, is assume one day that MSN will develop its own ad network," Meisel said. "I don't know when that day is or if it will come. Until then, we're going to continue to serve them well."

Meisel was echoing comments made by Yahoo CEO Terry Semel a day earlier during a Bear Sterns conference in Florida, acknowledging that MSN would likely end up as a competitor to search-advertising networks offered by Yahoo and Google. "I welcome that," he said. "It's good to have good competition." Yahoo's search distribution partners include CNN.com, InfoSpace and Excite.

Clear Channel Seals 50-Year China Pact

New York, March 8 (Reuters) – Clear Channel Entertainment on Monday announced a 50-year joint venture with the state-owned Beijing Gehua Cultural Development Group, creating what one Clear Channel exec called an "opportunity for unprecedented cultural exchange of music, sports and other live-entertainment events."

The newly formed organization, Gehua Clear Channel Entertainment & Sports Co. Ltd., will have first right of refusal to launch live tours of performance shows and sporting events in China and will be involved with event promotion, venue management, artistic management, sponsorship opportunities and merchandising. Each partner will have a 50% stake and share profits equally, Clear Channel Entertainment senior vp Ed Cunningham said.

NY Times Rings Changes

New York, March 7 (Dow Jones) – New York Times Co. will launch a Thursday style section and revamp its business section.

In a press release Monday, the publisher said the mid-week cousin of the Sunday Styles will make its debut on April 14, and it will focus on fashion, fitness, beauty, shopping and lifestyle trends and products.

The newspaper will also redesign its Business Day section, Monday through Saturday, starting May 5. The move will add features and marquee writers like Joe Nocera, who is joining the paper from *Fortune Magazine*.

Hostage Crisis



Xinhua Photo

A Costa Rican police officer carries a wounded hostage as an assault team prepares to take the local branch of the National Bank during a hostage standoff in Monteverde, Costa Rica, 110 kilometers north of the capital of San Jose, Wednesday, March 9, 2005. Nine people were killed including one police officer, as well as three gunmen, and five hostages.

CBO Says Bush Budget Worsens Deficit

Washington, March 4 (Reuters) – The longer-term deficit outlook will worsen under President Bush's new budget plan, but this year's deficit will be less than White House projections, Congress' fiscal watchdog said on Friday.

This year's deficit under the Bush plan will be about \$394 billion, slightly lower than the record \$427 billion the White House had forecast, the Congressional Budget Office said in a preliminary assessment.

The CBO report also showed Bush should be able to reach his target of halving the deficit in five years from a starting point of \$521 billion. Critics say that figure was inflated.

But the CBO added that over the longer term, the deficit would soar to a cumulative \$2.6 trillion over 10 years under the Bush plan, compared with the \$980 billion shortfall the CBO had forecast without the proposal.

"Over the 2006-2015 period, the president's proposals would increase the total deficit by an estimated \$1.6 trillion," the CBO said.

Bush's plan to extend certain tax cuts is the main reason for a loss of \$1.4 trillion in revenues under his budget plan, the CBO said.

The agency had also been expecting the deficit to turn to a small surplus in 2012 under current policies, but that would disappear under Bush's plan.

"Under the president's policies, deficits would continue throughout the 10-year period," the report said.

The CBO also noted that Bush's 2006 budget, which only covers five years,

did not include any estimates for the cost of adding private accounts to Social Security. Some estimates say that could cost \$2 trillion over 10 years.

Democrats blame Bush's tax cuts for adding to the nation's fiscal woes and said the CBO report underscored that point.

"Today's analysis from the CBO is the latest in a long line of evidence, all indicating that the administration's fiscal policies are moving us deeper and deeper into debt," said South Carolina Democratic Rep. John Spratt.

Local Report:

The US current account deficit – the excess of what Americans spend on goods, services and funds transferred abroad over what the US earns from the rest of the world – permits many countries to run surpluses that would not otherwise be possible.

The continuing current account deficit reflects a deficiency of savings in the US relative to investment there. However, many other developed countries such as Japan, Germany, France and Italy have an excess of savings, part of which can be offset by the excess of US consumption.

According to Richard Cooper, an economics professor at Harvard University, the US deficit is not only sustainable but also logical. The current account deficit will fall steadily as a share of GDP, reaching 2.2 per cent in 2018, when the ratio of claims to GDP peaks. The trade deficit, meanwhile, would need to decline as foreigners' earnings on US investments rise. It is reinforced when we consider how the rest of the world generates some \$6,000bn a year in savings. Most of this is invested locally, but the US current account deficit implies that some is also invested in the US.

As commentators frequently note, the US deficit has resulted in the weak US dollar and brought about lots of negative effects on the global economy. But we can't overlook the fact that US loan consumption has meanwhile been propelling economic development.

– **International Herald Leader, March 1, 2005**

(Qiu Jiaoning)

Sony Appoints First Foreign CEO

Tokyo, March 7 (AP) – Determined to break with its past, Sony Corp. appointed a foreigner – former CBS executive Howard Stringer – as CEO Monday and vowed to turn around its lagging electronics sector by linking it with its entertainment businesses, a goal that has long eluded the company.

A native of Wales who later acquired US citizenship, Stringer, 63, has helped make Sony's music and movie business one of the Japanese company's few bright spots in recent years. He replaces Nobuyuki Idei, 67, who has led the Tokyo-based company for a decade.

The shake-up comes amid growing concern about whether Tokyo-based Sony can revive its electronics operations in the face of cheaper competition from Asian rivals.

Foreign executives at major Japanese companies are still extremely rare. The one exception has been Brazilian-born Carlos Ghosn, chief executive at Nissan Motor Co., who has become a hero here by reviving the automaker from near-collapse to growth in the past several years.

Stringer, vice chairman at Sony and chief executive of Sony Corp. of America, was chosen as chairman and chief executive by the board, subject to shareholders' approval in June. He speaks no Japanese and will continue to live in New York and travel between the US and Japan.

Kunitake Ando said he was also stepping down as president to be replaced by Ryoji Chubachi, 57, an executive with experience in Sony's electronics and networking divisions.

At a news conference in Tokyo, Stringer brushed off questions about his ability to lead a Japanese company. He joined Sony in 1997 after serving as president of CBS News from 1986 to 1988, and then president of CBS Broadcast Group from 1988 to 1995. CBS is now part of the media conglomerate Viacom Inc.

Analyst's Take:

Sony is now poised to move forward with its global entertainment, electronics and technology strategy. The current management team led by Mr. Nobuyuki Idei, Representative Corporate Executive Officer, Chairman and Group CEO has implemented an effective reallocation of group-wide resources and promotion of cross-border alliances within the Sony Group. This has resulted in the strengthening of the entertainment content businesses, the solidifying of the mobile phone business, development of the next generation semiconductor chip, and the integration and expansion of the financial services business.

"The Sony Group will have a new management team centering on Howard Stringer and Dr. Ryoji Chubachi. Mr. Stringer's global perspective allows him to bring Sony's electronics and entertainment groups together and to integrate their resources effectively. Dr. Chubachi's deep experience of the electronics business and profound understanding of technology issues have won the respect of Sony's engineering community," said Mr. Nobuyuki Idei.

– **Sony perspectives offered by Zhang Yunze from the Public Relations Department of Sony China, March 8, 2005**
(Qiu Jiaoning)

Famed Shichahai Resident Calls for Balanced Development

By Zhang Di

Sidney Shapiro, a member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), urged authorities to readjust traffic control around Shichahai, as the peace of the historic community has been disrupted by booming tourism and car traffic, *Beijing News* reported.

Shapiro, a famed American translator who lives on Nanguangfang hutong in the Shichahai neighborhood, raised the issue in a proposition during the ongoing annual parliament session on Thursday.

His street was marked one-way and cars could not enter between



Sidney Shapiro

Photo by Ni Huachu

4:30 pm and midnight, causing serious inconvenience to residents, he said.

"The traffic control in the area is not scientific," Shapiro argued.

"Due to restrictions, taxis cannot go through Nanguangfang during that period. Elderly people and children who live on the street have to walk a long way to find transportation."

Sources from the Beijing Traffic Board said the restriction on Nanguangfang was set to cut traffic during peak hours for nearby bars and restaurants, *Beijing News* said.

Without controls, traffic jams would be inevitable, one board source was quoted as saying.

Other Shichahai residents backed

up Shapiro.

Shapiro's neighbor, Mr. Luo, said in January his wife had to walk a long way from a taxi back home after receiving an operation.

"She was very weak and not in shape for any movement," Luo said. Shapiro also called for improved management of pedicabs offering hutong sightseeing tours.

Every day, more than 30 tricycles parked along Nanguangfang, making the narrow alley even more crowded, he said.

"Balance should be maintained in the community's development," he said. "Shichahai should not be developed at the expense of local residents."

Academics Lining Up for Middle School Teaching Spots

By Jia Ting

Holders of graduate degrees and PhDs have been applying in almost unprecedented numbers for positions as teachers at local middle schools, significantly raising the average education level of teacher applicants from just a year ago.

Thousands of people, including 105 people with PhDs and more than 3,000 with master's degrees, have applied for the 40 teaching spots open at the Beijing No. 11 Middle School, Principal Li Jinchu told *Beijing Today*.

Over 95 percent of applicants for teaching positions at one of Beijing's highest-regarded high schools, the Experimental High School attached to Beijing Normal University, this year boast postgraduate degrees, Teng Shuling from the school's principal office said. "Compared to the past, we have more PhD applicants for positions this year," Teng added.

A man who received a PhD from Huadong Normal University and recently applied to teach high school was quoted as saying by *Beijing Youth Daily* that he was inspired by the working environment at the secondary education level.

"I like being a teacher, especially at high school, because you can have a much closer relationship with your students than at university. You feel more respected by your students," the unnamed teacher told the newspaper.

"Thanks to the advantages of its location and cultural and living environment, Beijing has become very attractive to high-level applicant from around the country. Most leading high schools, like us, receive plenty of resumes from people with master's degrees or higher every year. Thirty years ago, a high school graduate could teach high school; 20 years ago an associate degree was enough; 10 decade a bachelor's degree was required; and today, advanced degrees are common," Li Jinchu said.



Photo by Li Shuzhuan

Kunming Lake Going Dry

By Liu Zhaoxi

The dryness that has plagued Beijing this winter has taken a severe toll on Kunming Lake in the Summer Palace. On Sunday, a whole swath of lake bottom was exposed south of the Seventeen-Arch Bridge, and only a thin layer of water and ice is left over the other sections.

A park janitor and several regular park goers said the lake had never before been so low.

There were several reasons the lake was so short of water, Li Kun, an employee with the Summer Palace administration office told *Beijing Today*. Some were natural causes, like water draining through the lake bottom and evapora-

tion. Another major cause was the overall water shortage striking the city.

"When the city is short of water, water used for landscaping is normally diverted for industry or public use," Li said.

Kunming Lake is normally 1.5 to two meters deep, he said. The lake gets most of its water from precipitation, supplemented by supply from the Jingmi canal. In late autumn every year, when the city enters dry season, the canal stops diverting water to the lake and the water level falls. This year, however, it has dropped to unusually low levels.

The canal has been reopened to refill the lake, Li said.

Carpooling Questioned in Beijing

By Liu Zhaoxi

Carpooling has become a rapidly developing trend in many large Chinese cities in recent years, but the practice has come under criticism from traffic authorities and taxi operators in Beijing, the *Beijing Daily Messenger* reported on Wednesday.

Most cab companies were dead-set against carpooling, the newspaper said. One taxi company employee was quoted as saying that expanding carpooling was certain to have a negative impact on the taxi industry.



A carpool stop outside Silver Maple Garden near Jiuxianqiao. Photo by Wang Wei

It is common practice for carpoolers to offer drivers some payment to cover gas expenses, but Zhong Mingxing, an official at the Beijing Traffic Enforcement Authority, told the newspaper that paying for private transportation was illegal because the drivers were not qualified to provide such services.

Zhong admitted it was difficult to catch people taking such illegal rides because most carpooling was done by private agreement without actual on-scene cash payment.

But as more people in Beijing buy cars and traffic gets worse, some people think carpooling could be an answer to the city's gridlock. Former head of the Beijing Traffic Management Bureau Duan Liren said carpooling between friends and relatives should be encouraged because it could relieve traffic pressure and make private cars more efficient.

The Internet has become a major platform for organizing carpooling, often done among strangers. Concerns about safety and debates on where the line lies between legal carpooling and illegal taxi operation have been discussed widely by local and domestic media, including a story in *Beijing Today* on December 17.



Kids from Huaibei village watched Red Scarf. Photo by Tian Yufeng

By Zhang Di

Jiang Boya, a 12-year-old student from a mountainous suburb of Beijing, had never seen a stage play until last Saturday.

That day, at the stroke of seven in the morning, she got up, packed, tied her red scarf very carefully and set out for central Beijing to watch a play.

Jiang was one of six children from the Peishi Primary School who went to downtown's Rainbow Theatre to watch a performance of *Red Scarf* by Beijing Children's Arts Troupe for their first taste of the stage, *Beijing Youth Daily* reported. The school stands in Huaibei village, Huairou District, more than 160 kilometers from the theatre.

The children could not hide their excitement. One student, Li Yunchuan, said, "I was too excited to fall asleep, and I dreamt of watching the play all night."

Village Kids Get First Taste of Drama

Like his classmates, Li could not keep his eyes off the performers and later said he was very impressed by the acting, the striking stage design and the humor of the play.

For a special treat, the six children were allowed to go backstage and visit the actors' dressing room after the performance. One girl said she wished the troupe could travel to her village to put on a show in the future.

"If we could bring a high quality play like this to the village, it would definitely have a positive influence on at least one child's future," said Zhang Maoxiang, the students' teacher.

Few people in Huaibei village had ever been able to see a play, let alone one in downtown Beijing, *Beijing Youth Daily* said.

But past experience has indicated that people in rural parts of the municipality are desperate for such culture. Last Spring Festival, people from Dashuiyu village packed out performances of Peking operas on a mobile stage.

The Beijing Donation Center for Project Hope sponsored the six students' dramatic trip.

Expansion Underway at Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall

By Wang Chun

Hoping to expand its collection and shine more light on one of the darkest chapters of China's modern history, the Memorial Hall of Compatriots Murdered in the Nanjing Massacre has been calling for people from all walks of life to contribute relics from the Japanese attack for a future exhibition.

With a budget of 540 million yuan, the Memorial Hall has launched an expansion project to renovate out-dated sections and add new display areas. The materials collected in the ongoing public donation drive will be shown when the new exhibition halls open.

The expansion has been timed to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of the end of the War of Resistance against Japan (1937-1945).

Preliminary plans call for the museum to expand by over 180,000 square meters and put more than 1,000 items recently collected from all over the world on show. More than 300 homes and 10 businesses in Nanjing were torn down or moved to make way for the expansion.

The memorial hall is located on grounds where 300,000 Chinese prisoners of war and civilians were killed on December 13, 1937. It was designed by famed Chinese architect Qi Kang.

Last year, a research group from the Memorial Hall set out on a 13-day research trip around Europe. To collect materials concerning the Nanjing massacre, the group visited public and national libraries and archives in Germany, England and Denmark.

Local Birds Speak Chinese Only

By Zhang Di

The latest domestically-made sonic bird repellers will be used to replace the imported ones currently in use at Capital International Airport because the foreign models have had little effect, *Beijing Times* reported on Wednesday.

Sonic repellers work to scare away birds by mimicking the sounds of their natural enemies.

An employee at the airport said the imported models were advertised to imitate nine different animal sounds, but they failed to live up to expectations.

"The imported repellers copy the sounds of foreign animals," the unnamed employee was quoted as saying. "But Chinese birds appear to have difficulty understanding foreign 'languages'."

The new Chinese-made devices feature rewritable disks that can record and update sounds Chinese birds are more likely to fear.

Birds are serious safety threats at every airport because they pose risk of being sucked into the engines of planes taking off and otherwise causing accidents.

Wave Airport Lines Goodbye

By Zhang Di

US-based Northwest Airlines became the first foreign airline to launch self-service check-in in China on Tuesday, *Beijing Youth Daily* reported.

The carrier has installed two self-service check-in kiosks at Beijing's Capital International Airport and four in Pudong International Airport in Shanghai.

"Self-service check-in kiosks make check-in easier and make things more convenient for passengers," Sandeep Bahl, general manager of Northwest Airlines China said.

Using the new kiosks, electronic ticket holders can check in and obtain boarding passes, change or confirm seat assignments and enter Northwest Airlines Worldperks membership information.

The computerized kiosks can be used in several languages, including Chinese, English, Japanese and French.

Clearing the way for easy international travel, the kiosks can also scan passports and instantly process passengers' personal information.

After they get their boarding passes, passengers can hand their luggage to airline ground staff to check in or proceed directly to their gates.

The world's fourth largest airline has previously introduced self-check-in service at airports across North America and at several in Asia, including Tokyo and Seoul.

Man Turns Newspaper Collection into Birthday Business

By Liu Zhaoxi

Birthday newspapers, old newspapers published on a person's birth date, are becoming popular gifts in Beijing thanks to the personal collection of one city resident, *Beijing Youth Daily* reported yesterday.

The collector, identified only as Mr. Zheng, started his collection in 1998. So far, he has collected over 500,000 copies of old newspapers, including nearly every issue of *People's Daily* from 1950 to 1993 and *Beijing Daily* from 1953 through 1994. Two treasures in his collection are issues of *People's Daily* from January 19, 1975 that carry portraits of Chairman Mao Zedong.

Zheng went into business selling the old newspapers as birthday gifts in September and has since sold over 100 copies. Most of his costumers were young and middle-aged people, he said.

Prices vary, but generally rise with a newspaper's age. A copy of a paper from the 1950s sells for about 300 yuan, Zheng said, adding he liked the idea that recipients would be able to hold living records of the days on which they were born.

10th NPC and CPPCC Held in Beijing

Proposals Aim to Curb Housing Speculation

By Zhou Ying

Guo Songhai, a member of the CPPCC, has suggested that taxes be levied on unused apartments and houses to curb speculation in the real estate market.

Guo, director of the Real Estate Economy Research Institute under the Shandong College of Economics, proposed to the Third Session of the CPPCC that local governments should establish policies on constructing more affordable houses.

"Houses are special commodities and should not be speculated like virtual products such as stocks," said the real estate expert. He said such speculation was partly responsible for escalating real estate prices.

According to an investigation conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics, by September last year 97.48 million square meters of commercial buildings were unused; 57.36 million square meters of residential housing were unoccupied, and the proportion of unoccupied housing surpassed 20 percent.

According to Guo, some rich people purchase houses not for personal usage but for speculation. "Buying a house without using it is a waste of resources and people should pay taxes for such behavior," said the CPPCC member.

The proposal also aimed to tackle bubbles in the real estate market and curb house price hiki-

ing, said Guo as quoted by Monday's *Beijing News*.

The proposal, after being revealed by the news media, aroused heated discussion. Yi Xianrong, an expert from the Institute of Financial Studies of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, advised progressive taxation on unused houses.

"The tax can adjust to the price of the house: the more expensive the house is, the higher the tax will be," Yi told *Beijing News* on Sunday. He added that the government should set up a clear system, establishing a related standard for the citizens and land agents.

However, some believe that taxes levied on houses will not solve the problem. Zhang Baquan, chairman of Beijing Antaeus Group, told the *Beijing News* on Sunday that the best approach is to reduce house prices by 15 to 20 percent.

Zhang said that the prices of houses depend on various factors, such as the orientation of the commodity, cost of the project, and the location, and it was unreasonable to fix a tax rate according to the house price. "That may block people from purchasing houses with higher prices," he warned.

"It is definitely the government's duty rather than the market's to solve the housing problem for people with low salaries," he added.

By Zhou Ying

China's top advisory body, the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), convened its annual full session in Beijing last Thursday.

The CPPCC may hold meetings to put forward proposals to the Central Military Commission of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the government, and its special committees may do the same. CPPCC members may conduct inspections, put forward draft resolutions, report on particular issues and make proposals and criticisms through various means.

Meanwhile, about 3,000 members of China's parliament, the National People's Congress (NPC), have arrived in Beijing from around the country for an annual session beginning on Saturday.

On the agenda of the session

will be Jiang Zemin's resignation from the post of Chairman of the State Central Military Commission and the expected succession of Hu Jintao. Hu took the post of chairman of the CPC last September.

According to Xinhua, the NPC deputies to the session are expected to air their opinions on a wide-range of issues when they review the government work report to be delivered by Premier Wen Jiabao on the opening day of the session.

Coal mine safety, construction of a harmonious society, the fight against corruption, farmers' income, food safety, growing disparity in income, unemployment, environmental protection, the stock markets, education and the anti-secession law, are expected to be the primary topics during the 10-day meeting, according to an online investigation by Xinhua.net.



Beijing Olympics Need Professional Training

By Jia Ting

A deputy to the National People's Congress has warned that a lot of work needs to be done in training management professionals in order to hold the Olympics Games successfully in 2008.

"Now we only have around 300 employees at the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games, whereas by 2008 the need will be closer to 4,000 staff. Another 100,000 volunteers and an extra 20,000 full-time service workers will also be required to serve the grand event," said Ji Baocheng, president of Renmin University of China and deputy to the National People's Congress, on Monday.

Ji pointed out that the Or-

ganizing Committee had started the training work, but said there was still a gap between the current situation and the ultimate goal. He said the training should target senior management professionals for the Beijing Organizing Committee for the 2008 Olympics, as well as helping athletes, coaches and referees, volunteers, security guards and service workers to participate in the preparations.

Beijing should set up a steering committee for the training and map out a comprehensive scheme as soon as possible to outline overall plans and detailed procedures including curriculum design, textbook compilation and recruitment of teachers, said Ji.

Advisor Urges Government Streamlining

By Jia Ting

Warning against the ballooning bureaucracy which costs China billions of dollars yearly in so-called "official consumption", a veteran political advisor Monday called for a new round of government streamlining across the country.

"Currently every 26 ordinary citizens in China have to support one official, while spending on government cars, reception fees and official training or tours abroad have reached a whopping amount," said Ren Yuling, a member of the 10th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference from Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

There are now as many as 45.72 million people on the payrolls of the central and local governments in China, plus some 5 million more who are supporting themselves with the administra-

tive power granted by the government. Citing media reports, Ren said that the spending on government cars, receptions and tours abroad amounted to 300 billion yuan, 200 billion yuan and 250 billion yuan respectively each year, while "most of the funds were used by leading cadres at various levels."

"The bureaucracy in China is expanding at an unprecedented speed, which is a quite worrisome phenomenon," said Ren.

The rapid expansion of bureaucracy has not only led to an oversized government and a huge waste of money, but also become a hotbed for corruption, with cases like abuse of power and selling official ranks occurring from time to time.

"Therefore, it is imperative to launch another round of government streamlining focusing on cutting the number of leading officials," suggested Ren.

Soundbites

By Zhou Ying

1. Deputy Proposes Memorial Day for Martyrs

Professor Kong Lingren with the Medical College of the Guangdong-based Jinan University has proposed a memorial day to commemorate martyrs who laid down their lives for the nation. He suggested activities on the special day should include a state memorial ceremony with flags flown at half-mast and presentation of wreaths to the martyrs' cemetery. "National museums and other patriotic education bases should open for free on this day," he added.

2. Calls to Regulate Use of Test-tube Technology

Professor Lu Guangxiu, a noted geneticist and member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, Sunday said China should enact a law to curb the abuse of test-tube technology for fear of an increasing risk of intermarriage in the coming decades. One of the most worrying consequences of the abuse of test-tube technology

is the unbalanced gender ratio of the newborn population, said the professor.

3. Advisors Urge Control of Government Car Spending

The lavish use of government cars came under fire Monday when advisors meeting at their annual session released the result of a study which shows each government car costs at least 50,000 yuan a year, but its operating efficiency is only one fifth of that of a taxi. "The central authorities should set forth guidelines for reform across the country, while it is also necessary to draw from the experience of foreign governments in the management of government transportation," said Sun Jiye, a member of the China's top advisory body.

4. NPC member calls for "Thanksgiving Day" for China

Cheng Wanzhi, a member of China's top legislative body suggested that China should set up its own Thanksgiving Day. He thought that many young people in China lack appreciation, and the festival may enhance a harmonious society.

Beijing Needs to Lose Weight

By Wang Xiaoxiao

Party secretaries from various municipal districts have disclosed the new plan for Beijing over the following decade: more new suburban towns will be established to absorb the growing population.

Due to the fast-growing population, it's becoming more and more difficult for Beijing to find a balance between its development and the limited resources including traffic, space and energy. The density of city center population is increasing especially fast which is already an obstacle to economic development. Beijing is in urgent need of slimming down. So the plan is to move residents from the centre to new towns on the outskirts. Actually, "The General Beijing City Plan 2004-2005" approved in January has already set forth several population criteria including moving 550,000 residents from the old city center.

Changping District to accommodate more colleges

Zhao Fengtong, the Party secretary of Changping District, told *Beijing Youth Daily* Tuesday that Changping District will have a new layout. The former Changping and Shahe satellite towns will become one new town covering an area of 40 square kilometers. Changping New Town

will enjoy a convenient traffic flow, using Badaling Expressway, the Sixth Ring road, the Beijing-Baotou Expressway which will start construction in the second half of this year, and a light rail in the near future. Besides, five more universities are to migrate to the new town as well.

700,000 will live in Huangcun Town, Daxing District

According to Shen Baochang, the Party secretary of Daxing District, Daxing New Town will be divided into Huangcun New Town and Yizhuang New Town. 190,000 residents are living in Huangcun at the moment and the population is expected to reach 700,000 by the year 2020, the same as the current population of the whole Daxing District.

Xuanwu District to keep population under 450,000

As one of the central districts, Xuanwu District now has over 600,000 people living in just 19 square kilometers. Tang Dasheng, the district Party secretary, said that over 100,000 residents will be moved out of the district and Xuanwu will try to keep its population under 450,000.

Within the next 10 years, 2.1 million citizens will find themselves living in new towns in Changping, Daxing Yizhuang and Huangcun new towns.

New Laws Needed for Protection of Women

By Zhou Ying

The Chinese Democratic League handed over a proposal at the CPPCC, suggesting that the property rights of mistresses should be properly protected by the law.

According to the Chinese Democratic League members, the Law on the Protection of Rights and Interests of Women should adjust to the new situation and problems and an amendment of the law is greatly needed.

Before raising the proposal about the amendment of the law, the Chinese Democratic League conducted a wide ranging investigation into the problems that woman confront nowadays. On the basis of their research, the league believe that some of these problems are currently ignored by the law, such as the property rights of mistresses. "There is still a question of how to acquire evidence, and how to set up criteria based on different situations," said the proposal.

The proposal also suggested that the Law on the Protection of Rights and Interests of Women should further clarify procedures relating to sexual harassment. "The law should introduce definitions of sexual harassment and ultimately lead to the arrest and punishment of offenders. The nature of the punishment also needs to be clarified," said the proposal.

New Anti-corruption Legislation

By Jia Ting

A deputy to China's top legislature said on Monday that an anti-corruption law plus independent anti-corruption authorities will improve efficiency and effectiveness in the country's fight against corruption.

"A specific law on anti-corruption and an independent anti-graft network that reports directly to the parliament will constitute a legal basis for China's fight against corruption," said Zhou Hongyu, deputy to the 10th National People's Congress from central China's Hubei Province. He thinks that the lack of a comprehensive legal network targeting corruption is the main reason contributing to the climbing number of bribery, pub-

lic fund appropriation and other graft cases in China.

Mr. Zhou also suggested setting up an independent auditing and self-reporting system for public servants to avoid corruption and graft. "I think distributing permanent bank accounts for individual civil servants would be an effective way to supervise their financial transactions. The supervisory committee will control it through random and periodic checks," Zhou pointed out.

Meanwhile, he said the Chinese government should step up with international cooperation and take international practice into consideration in its fight against corruption, because corrupt officials are very likely to transfer their illicit money abroad.

Do Chinese consider the US a competitor or a friend? The answer appears to be both. Some 49 percent of people polled in a recent survey identified the US as China's competitor, while a total of 47.7 percent were more friendly, saying the US was a friend (10.4 percent), a model (11.7 percent) or a cooperator (25.6 percent). More than 56 percent said they believed the US was trying to hold back China, while 19.6 percent disagreed.

What Chinese Think of the US

An American boy in Texas reads a brochure titled "30 Years of Sino-US Relations" in a local library.

Photo by Xinhua

By Dong Nan

Relations between China and the US are complicated, to say the least, and public perception in China of that relationship is important to politicians, diplomats and scholars on both sides of the Pacific Ocean. A survey released by the Beijing-based *Global Times* newspaper this month has shone some light on what Chinese people think of Americans, American politics and the current state of Sino-US relations.

The newspaper conducted the survey in the five major cities of Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chongqing and Wuhan with the help of the Institute of American Studies under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

The majority of respondents said they thought relations between the two nations were fine. Eighteen percent said they were very satisfied with the relationship, 51.9 percent answered "moderately satisfied" and one percent said they were satisfied, for a total of over 70 percent satisfaction. "Not satisfied" was the answer chosen by 23 percent of the people surveyed and 1.8 percent said they were "very unsatisfied." The rest said they did not know.

A similar number of positive responses came in on the question of Chinese people's general attitudes towards Americans. Almost 53 percent of those surveyed said they moderately liked Americans and 13.2 percent said they liked Americans very much.



Nearly 21 percent said they did not like people from the US and 13.1 percent answered they could not say.

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Asked to identify the major stumbling block in Sino-US relations, 60.5 percent named the Taiwan issue. When asked "what are you unsatisfied about most regarding the US government?" "selling weapons to Taiwan" was the most popular answer, chosen by 37.6 percent of respondents, followed by "the war in Iraq" (31.7 percent) and "strengthened military ties to Japan" (7.9 percent).

Will the US and China face conflicts in the future? Just under 12 percent were sure that would happen, 41.2 percent said the possibility existed and the rest ruled conflict out.

Most respondents held negative opinions of US criticism of China on the issue of human rights. Just under half (49.3 percent) thought that criticism was an attempt by the US to undermine China's stability, 10.4 percent thought that it was damaging to China's image and 19.1 percent said it was a result of US ignorance about China. Only 15.7 percent thought that US

was trying to help China to improve the state of its internal human rights.

Have Sino-US relations improved in recent years? Just under 51 percent of respondents said "nothing has changed," while 27.3 percent said relations had improved. Forty-five percent thought Sino-US relations would remain in their present condition for the remainder of US President George W. Bush's second term and 29.4 percent predicted some improvement.

Most of the respondents had positive beliefs about the impact of developing Sino-US relations - 61.9 percent said it would bolster China's economic growth and 49.3 percent thought it would improve progress of reform in this country. However, 55.7 percent thought that the onslaught of US culture had mixed influence on Chinese culture and only 22 percent said that influence was mostly positive.

The majority of people surveyed expressed admiration for different aspects of US society. Almost 44 percent named advanced science and technology as the American quality they most admired, 20.9 percent said its mature legal system and 17.9 percent answered Americans' high standards of living.

Chinese people also appear to appreciate the Sino-US economic relationship. Some 46 percent thought that economic relations improved political relations and 46 percent said it enhanced friendship between people of the two countries; but 43 percent pointed out that with increasing trade had come

a rise in conflicts. Twenty-three percent said China was the major benefactor of economic intercourse between the two countries, while 24 percent thought the US was the biggest winner.

Among the respondents, 49.8 percent said they were not biased toward US products in the Chinese market and said they did not care where products came from as long as they offered good quality and related services; 25.5 percent said they welcomed US products in the domestic market and believed increased trade would benefit both countries.

Regarding American culture, 31.9 percent said they could accept US culture but it did not have much to do with their daily lives, while 27.5 percent said they appreciated American culture and thought it had given rise to many great works.

The survey found that most people came to their conclusions about the US based on media, not from actual interaction with Americans. Some 62 percent said they got information about the US mainly from newspapers, magazines and television, 20.7 percent said American movies were their main sources of information and only 3.7 percent said they had chances to directly communicate with Americans to get information about the US.

Survey information:

The survey was done by *Global Times* and involved 1,175 residents of Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chongqing and Wuhan.

(Source: *Global Times*)

Brands on the Brain

By Dong Nan

When you shop, do you tend to choose brand name products? How do brands affect everyday life? Those were among the questions a survey conducted by *Beijing Sci-Tech Report* set out to answer on the road to determining how important brands were to people and identifying the 10 most influential marks in Beijing.

Nearly 40 percent of respondents said a good brand name could affect people's consumption and lifestyles and 55 percent thought name brands played "very important" roles in peoples' lives, while 32 percent thought brands were just "important" and a mere seven percent thought they were not important.

How do people share information about name brands and what do they typically talk about? The survey found that 21 percent talked most about electrical appliances, 15 percent about food and beverage brands, 12 percent about mobile phones and daily use commodities, 10 percent mostly discussed clothing brands, 10 percent talked about cultural products and 6 percent focused on makeup.

When talking brands, 18 percent of respondents said the main

subject was price, 18 percent identified the experience of buying and using name brand products and 10 percent discussed branding promotions.

What kinds of name brands are the best indicators of taste and judgement? Thirty-four percent of respondents said electrical appliances, 22 percent chose clothing brands, 15 percent said food and beverages, 15 percent chose automobiles and 10 percent said makeup.

When choosing between Chinese or foreign brands, 25 percent said they would decide based on quality of after-sales services, 24 percent admitted to thinking of price above all else, 20 percent said they would judge by technological level and 20 percent said they would decide based on products' outward appearances.

At the end of its report, the *Beijing Sci-tech Report* named Nokia, Haier, Volkswagen, Sony, McDonald's, LG, Lenovo, Tongrentang (traditional Chinese medicine), Modern Group (real estate) and Microsoft as the 10 most influential brands in Beijing of 2004.

Survey information:

The survey was conducted by Beijing Sci-tech Report and Beijing Youth Daily and involved around 10,000 respondents.

Survey Susses Out Women's Health, Sources of Concern

By Dong Nan

The arrival of International Women's Day on Tuesday put women's issues in the spotlight this week. A survey recently conducted by the Beijing Social Psychology to determine the general state of mental health among the capital's women has gone one step further towards understanding what many women in this city think of their lives and what are the sources of their fears and worries.

Most healthy, optimistic

Nearly three out of five respondents said they were in fine physical and mental shape, 32.3 percent described their condition as so-so and 8.5 percent said they had some sort of physical or mental problem.

When asked to evaluate the women around them, including relatives, friends, colleagues and acquaintances, 62.2 percent of the respondents said they thought most other women were in good mental condition, 26.5 percent said they thought half the women around them were mentally healthy and 8.5 percent thought most of the women they know had some kind of mental problem.

Around 80 percent of respondents said they could weigh their personal advantages and disadvantages level-headedly and 63.2 percent said that they would try to correct their shortcomings and work to improve themselves. The same percentage of respondents said that they were basically optimistic about their lives and their futures.

Major problems

Major sources of psychological trouble came from attitudes towards work and life and will power, the survey found. Some 23 percent of respondents said they were not decisive and always hesitated when making decisions; 18.9 percent said that they lacked the will power to stick things out; and 14.9 percent said that they did not know how to enjoy their lives.

Another major problem was that many did not like their jobs - especially women between 26 and 30 years old, 58.3 percent



of whom said they were not satisfied professionally. They were followed in rates of work-related problems by women 46 to 55 (52.8 percent) and 18 to 25 (42.9 percent).

Under pressure

About half of the women surveyed described the amount of pressure in their lives as heavy, while one third called their pressure moderate, seven percent said they felt little pressure and 6.6 percent said they faced no pressure at all. The top three sources of pressure identified by the women were healthcare problems, increasing costs of living and income worries, followed by safety, providing for the elderly, education of their children and housing problems.

When pressure reached unbearable levels, respondents said they resorted to outdoor activities, including sport, travel, shopping and walking, talking with families or friends, and "readjusting their psychological condition." A minority chose more negative methods of blowing off steam, such as escaping, not talking to others or losing their temper.

Survey information:

The survey was done by *Beijing Social Psychology Institute* based on questionnaires sent to 1,000 Beijing women 18 to 60 years old.

Survey of women's psychological health

Statements	Yes	Moderate	No	Others
Pressures in my life are heavy	49.6%	32.4%	6.6%	7.0%
I enjoy my life	58.2%	25.4%	14.9%	1.5%
I know my advantages	78.6%	10.0%	10.9%	0.5%
I know my disadvantages	79.6%	11.4%	9.0%	0.0%
I can face my disadvantages	80.6%	10.9%	7.0%	1.5%
I can correct my shortcomings and try to perfect myself	63.2%	22.4%	12.9%	1.5%
I am optimistic	81.5%	10.4%	8.0%	0.1%
I can change my mood when I feel bad	70.1%	20.9%	8.5%	0.5%
I seldom lose control	82.0%	11.9%	6.0%	0.1%
I am active	70.1%	20.9%	8.5%	0.5%
I am decisive	54.2%	21.9%	23.4%	0.5%
I have the will power to stick things out	56.7%	21.9%	23.4%	0.9%
I have good relationships with others	78.6%	18.4%	1.5%	1.5%

Shanghai Residents Burnt to Death for Refusing to Move



The burnt house in the demolished Maiqili area

Photo by Zhang Jun

By Liu Zhaoxi

A fire broke out at a house on Wulumuqi Road in Shanghai at about 1:30am on January 9, killing two people from a family of five living in the house. Firefighters later found evidence of arson at the scene. More than a month later, Shanghai police arrested three suspects in the case, all of whom worked for a local demolition company.

The victims

The two who lost their lives in the fire were 70-year-old Zhu Shuikang and his wife, 71-year-old Li Xingzhi. Their son, Zhu Jianqiang, along with his wife and daughter were rescued. Zhu Shuikang and his wife lived in a room on the other side of the house, and were unable to escape the flames. They were later carried out by firefighters, but died on their way to hospital.

The burnt building is a three-story house of the old Shanghai style, with arch-like doorheads and brick sculpture. The building is in a residential area called Maiqili in Xuhui District, which was part of the French concession before 1949 and is still one of most valuable areas of real estate in Shanghai.

Shanghai Urban Development Co., Ltd., a real estate company invested in by Xuhui district government, got the land in 2002 through a land auction. A rebuilding project of the Maiqili area, measuring more than 20,000 square meters, was under way, which meant the building accommodating the Zhu family and other old buildings would be demolished to make way for new towers. The Shanghai Urban Development Co. undertook the project, and its subsidiary demolition company was also hired by the district government to take the task of moving the residents out.

Change of plan

The Maiqili project was sup-

posed to be another rebuilding project in the ongoing reform of the older areas of Shanghai. The movement started in the early 1990s, aiming at tackling the squalid residential conditions for thousands of citizens. The government would provide favorable policies to companies carrying out such projects, such as reducing or even waiving land leasing fees and other fees collected by the government.

The Maiqili area was approved for such a rebuilding project in 2001 and according to the city policy, Shanghai Urban Development Co., the real estate developer undertaking the project, was spared having to pay the land leasing fees of about 80 million yuan.

Not long after the project was approved, however, Xuhui district transformed the project from an old area rebuilding one to a "land reservation" one. Some local real estate developers pointed out that this transformation violated several governmental regulations and policies. For one thing, to transform the nature of a project involving such a large piece of land has to get approval from the city government, but the Xuhui district government made the decision by itself.

As one resident of Maiqili said, the district government played both referee and player in the project. But with the transformation of the project, many other things changed.

Fight for the right to move back

Part of the policy of rebuild-

ing old residential areas is that previous residents are encouraged to move back after the new residential buildings are constructed. They still have to purchase the new home, but enjoy favorable policies to get a cheaper rate. The Maiqili project was approved as a rebuilding project in 2001 and subject to the city policy of encouraging moving back. But after it was turned into a land reservation project, these policies no longer applied.

Part of the policy of rebuilding old residential areas is that previous residents are encouraged to move back after the new residential buildings are constructed. They still have to purchase the new home, but enjoy favorable policies to get a cheaper rate. The Maiqili project was approved as a rebuilding project in 2001 and subject to the city policy of encouraging moving back. But after it was turned into a land reservation project, these policies no longer applied.

Instead, the company offered two options to residents: cash compensation or moving to a residential area on the outskirts of the city, but not the option of moving back. Residents in Maiqili were not impressed by either of the options. In the case of cash compensation, the money they would get would not be enough to buy a new apartment in Maiqili or nearby areas. That was because the compensation was calculated based on the current housing area, but the existing resi-

dences have had families crowded into the relatively small old houses for decades. This was supposedly a motivation for the rebuilding project in the first place. The residents did not want to move to the suburbs either, because it meant longer distances to work and the lack of various public facilities.

"We've been living here for five or six decades. Why do we have to sacrifice that for their business?" one resident asked. "We want nothing, just to move back."

The company's interests lie elsewhere. Deputy general manager of Shanghai Urban Development Co. Chen Anmin wrote in a work plan for the second half of 2004, "Starting the construction earlier can get the company project loan earlier, which will have an impact on the overall interests of the company."

The conflicts between the residents and the demolition company started from the very beginning of the company's efforts to move them out in 2002, and continued in the following years.

Especially after 2003, the conflicts escalated. Those who refused to sign contracts and agree to move often found their power lines cut, window glass broken or discovered gas leakages. Fire was also reported in 2004. Some residents were physically forced out, during which some of them were injured.

Zhu Jianqiang and his family were among those who refused to move. They continued to live in the old house when many of their neighbors, including those living downstairs, had left. Before their home was set on fire, Zhu once was beaten by employees of the demolition company and was injured. His wife was also threatened.

One day, Yang Sunqin, deputy manager of the demolition company, told employee Lu Peide to "scare them [the Zhu family] with a small fire," and Lu gave the order to another employee Wang Changkun, who set the fire, local media said.

The suspects were arrested on February 24. The local media reported that the fire had been set in pursuit of "private interests". A public relations employee for Xuhui District told *Beijing Today* on Tuesday that the suspects have not yet been put on trial and the details of the case will have to wait until the trial opens. He did not say when the trial would begin.

(Sources: *Shanghai Morning Post*, *Southern Metropolitan Daily*, *Southern Weekend*)

By Liu Zhaoxi

Police in Jingzhou, Hubei Province, announced on Sunday they had cracked a group of professional exam cheats called "Global Exam Surrogate Group".

The group had claimed to be the first organization in China providing "professional techniques" to assist examinees, from providing surrogates to take the exams for them to test answers and fake diplomas. They solicited potential customers through their websites and charged money for the services.

Online deception

At the end of December, five people contacted the web supervision unit of Jingzhou police, saying they had been swindled by an exam surrogate group.

Investigations followed. In mid January, the police located a suspect who was posting messages online in an Internet bar in Jingzhou.

On the morning of January 20, seven suspects were arrested in two Internet bars in Jingzhou. They told the police that their boss was Chen Ruisong, who was not in Jingzhou at that time, and that Chen's girlfriend, Wang Ying, was in charge of their payroll. They also revealed the cell phone numbers of the two.

the business was much larger and Chen's operation in Jingzhou was only one example. He set up the websites for the local market with the help of a person surnamed Guo, whom Chen had encountered while chatting online. The police started to look for Guo.

They found a similar case that had been cracked in Beijing in 2004, in which the suspects revealed the head of the group had an online name of "Dong Ge." The suspects also said Dong Ge lived in Xi'an. When Beijing police were trying to track him down, Dong Ge ceased all online activity and cell phone communication, disappearing from the view of the police.

Putting the evidence from both cases together, the Jingzhou police came to the conclusion Guo and Dong Ge were the same person. His group was active in 2003 and 2004, swindling money through the Internet by promising exam cheating services. Although the group did provide exam surrogates, cheating tools and fake diplomas sometimes, 99 percent of its activities were purely deceiving clients, the police said.

To resume the connection with the lead member in the group, the police asked Chen Ruisong to con-

Police Crack Exam Cheat Group

In the afternoon, officer Li Enzhong sent text messages to the couple: "You are a suspect in a crime. You must turn yourself in to the police by four o'clock this afternoon, or you'll face severe punishment." The police started to trace their cell phone signals after that.

Wang Ying contacted Chen immediately after receiving the text message, and the couple began to plan their flight. Chen was on his way from Wuhan back to Jingzhou when he received Wang's call. He immediately turned around and returned to Wuhan. Meanwhile, he asked Wang to delete all contacts on the web and from their online chat software.

Wang acted instantly. But before she could finish deleting the evidence, the police had located her in an Internet bar in Jingzhou and arrested her.

She told the police Chen Ruisong was planning to fly to Beijing from Wuhan the next day. The police rushed to the airport in Wuhan in the middle of the night and went through the flight information. No ticket purchasing record was found for Chen Ruisong.

Not knowing of Wang's arrest, Chen had kept texting his girlfriend and finally made a phone call to her. Officer Li answered the call, and succeeded in persuading Chen to surrender.

On January 22, Chen turned himself in to the police and handed over 45,000 yuan of illicit money.

Digging deep into the group

Chen, a Jingzhou resident and a local Internet company manager, started the surrogate business in August 2004 by setting up special websites. He hired 20 or so people to send out soliciting information through chat rooms. He and his girlfriend took charge of accounts. Within two months, about 200 college students in 29 cities across the country paid Chen more than 500,000 yuan for his services both as an exam surrogate and for providing test answers.

But Chen was only part of the exam surrogate web. It turned out

to continue his contact with Guo. They wanted him to say things had gone wrong in Jingzhou and that he had fled to Shanghai. Guo initially appeared not to believe Chen's message as he asked why he wasn't using a Shanghai cell phone card. Shanghai police swiftly provided one for Chen and after that Guo accepted Chen's story.

Resumed communication allowed the police to locate Guo in Lanzhou, Gansu Province. The police took Chen with them to Lanzhou right away to catch Guo. With the help of local police, Guo was arrested on January 30. Before long, other members of the group were caught in different cities.

The boss

Guo, or Dong Ge's real name is Xi Xiukui, 23, from Shandong. He was seen as one of the most brilliant young men in his hometown village and he went to college in Lanzhou. He dreamed of going abroad to study but his parents were not able to provide the funding. In 2003, Xi found on the Internet that many college students were looking for surrogates for the College English Test. This gave him an idea for making money.

He printed thousands of "exam help" notes and posted them in colleges around Lanzhou, charging money for his promised services. He made over 500,000 yuan within six months. Although he did send test answers by cell phone to some of the examinees, most of those who paid him got nothing.

Lanzhou police discovered his behavior and arrested him in April 2004. Although released after 20 days on the grounds of lack of evidence, Xi was expelled by his university.

In the following months, Xi continued to expand his group by enrolling people from all over China to join his online business, including Chen Ruisong and those in Beijing. There were five websites set up in all, which swindled money from about 1,000 people. The business had brought in more than 1.7 million yuan by the time it was destroyed by police in January.

(Source: *Chu Tian Jin Bao*)



An advert for the Global Exam Surrogate Group at a college campus

Photo by Chu Tian Jin Bao



Peacock Princess

Photos provided by China Disabled People's Arts Troupe

school, discovered more in her. She exceeded the other students and seemed more thoughtful. In time, Lihua had developed a special talent to express her feelings and emotions: dance.

Her favorite class was "rhythm and vibration". The teacher stepped on the elephant-foot drum placed on the ground, sending vibrations through the wooden floor. When the rhythms reached the students, they stirred with excitement. Lihua got down and pressed her face closely to the floor. Eyeing shining, she signed with a finger pointing to her chest: "I'm loving it!"

Dancing programs on TV also inspired her imagination and made her want to dance along. She felt she had finally found a language belonging to her, which allowed her to express her understanding of life to the full. Lihua became addicted to dancing.

Luckily, a dance teacher working in the school noticed her talent and began to train her. Her parents were also eager to help. When her father went to Wuhan for a business trip, he bought her a pair of real dancing shoes. Lihua was mad with joy. Standing on the bed and looking at herself in the mirror, she turned and turned and was unwilling to take them off. But her father never thought that his daughter's life would be forever connected to dancing.

Hard road to success

The 13-year-old Tai Lihua went to Wuhan alone to attend middle school. There she began to perform on stage for the first time. When she turned 15, she was picked up by the artists from China Disabled People's Art Troupes to study and dance in the troupe.

First entering the troupe, Lihua's basic techniques were not even up to a low standard. The first trail dance she was asked to perform by the teacher is *The Spirit of Peacock*. Without the basic skills gained from professional training, the difficulties seemed to be insurmountable for her. Although Lihua tried her best, the teacher had no difficulty in finding details that she couldn't execute. At last the teacher went out, leaving her alone in the exercise room.

But Lihua has been used to difficulties and nothing would stop her from dancing. She could do only a few turns at first, but half a month later she was doing 200 to 300 easily. The teacher began to see hope in her. Although Lihua has never counted how many beats *The Spirit of Peacock* has, her teacher saw her finish all 700

Technology. Staying at home alone one day, Li Chun saw a beautiful girl carrying a large suitcase standing in the corridor. The girl was Tai Lihua, looking for a friend of her mother, who lived next door to Li Chun's home. As the friend was not at home, Chun invited her to come in his home and wait there.

Li Chun doesn't know sign language, so they talked through writing for a whole afternoon until the friend she was waiting for arrived home. Before parting, they exchanged mailing addresses. But Li Chun couldn't get to sleep that night. When the morning came, he couldn't wait to write a letter to Lihua. Several days later she received the letter and went to the university to look for him.

The campus is very big, Lihua and her friend had to ask for direction from a student who happened to be the class monitor of Li Chun's class. All seem to be predestined and they quickly fell in love with each other. A month later, Lihua went to Hong Kong for a performance. During the 14 days she stayed in Hong Kong, Li Chun wrote down all his feelings for the days of their parting and showed Lihua the diary when she returned. Lihua was deeply moved and accepted

Dancing in Silence

By Hester Xu and Arron Chang

On stage, she is the perfect embodiment of the Buddha of Mercy Kwan-yin, slowly waving her hands. This was a program played during the Chinese New Year's evening gala, and moving with an air of rhythm, the 24 year-old Tai Lihua looks just like any other talented dancer from the outside. Yet the difference is great. She is entirely deaf and knows nothing about the music that accompanies so many of her amazing performances. However, the *Kwan-yin of 1,000 Hands* performed by the deaf-mute women dancers of China Disabled People's Arts Troupe won the special award and the first prize in the category of singing and dancing in the nation-wide selection for the Best-loved Program in the News Years Gala.

Plunged into a world of silence

Fate might have been less cruel to Lihua if she had been born deaf. But she was plunged into a world of total silence by a high fever at the age of two. Soon Lihua lost her sweet singing voice but was just too young to notice. When she turned five years old, several friends in the kindergarten played a game with her by covering her eyes and asking her to tell the name of the person who spoke. Only then did she realize she was different from other people. She cried bitterly.

Her father wouldn't give up hope of finding a remedy, and took her to hospitals all over the country in Wuhan, Shanghai and Beijing. But Lihua couldn't be cured. When she reached seven years old, her parents had to send her to a school for the deaf-mutes.

Tai Lihua did quite well in the school. But her teacher in charge of the class, who was also the headmaster of the

Fate might have been less cruel to Tai Lihua if she had been born deaf. But as the top dancer in China Disabled People's Arts Troupe, she believes that the lives of all people are like the moon phases, the full, gibbous, quarter and crescent, a condition that you can't choose. But you could always choose the angle from which you see your life and see more of a fulfilled life.



beats without missing a single one.

There is no easy way for her, she had to memorize each beat and practice each step and movement repeatedly. She had to repeat all 700 beats to perform *The Spirit of Peacock*.

After that she spent some time practicing dancing everyday and was always black and blue. Unwilling to worry her mother, she always wore long trousers in the summer. Once her mother rolled up Lihua's trousers when she was taking a nap in the afternoon. On finding her legs full of bruises and scars, she wept. Pointing her heart, Lihua signed with a brilliant smile, "I love dancing and don't feel any pain."

She went abroad to perform for the first time at 15. The troupe assembled for training in the winter. Lihua went in the exercise room wearing a cotton-padded coat, but soon after the exercise started she was streaming with sweat and could only wear a thin shirt. Her knees bled from the rubbing and became swollen, but she never complained.

With persistence and talent, Tai Lihua stood out from other dancers and won numerous awards. But she is most proud of being instructed by Yang Liping, the famous dancer and choreographer of *The Spirit of Peacock*. Yang could hardly believe her own eyes when seeing Lihua perform her beloved dance: "I have choreographed this dance for many, many years, but if I wasn't accompanied by the music, I don't know if I still could dance with such feeling. And yet you've done it perfectly, it's really not simple!" She couldn't help but demonstrate for her.

Perfect love

As a talented dancer and beautiful woman, Tai Lihua easily caught the admiration of many men.

In 1993, Lihua went to Malaysia to perform with the troupe. After watching her dancing, a young man from a rich family was so infatuated by her charms that he immediately ran backstage to express his love for her. But Lihua declined. When people asked her why she wouldn't marry a foreigner to live a rich life abroad, Lihua smiled and wrote on paper: "I love my home country and don't want to leave my parents who have done so much for me. I also don't want to leave my friends who love me so much."

Lihua met her husband Li Chun by chance. At the end of 1995, Li Chun was still a student of Huazhong University of Science and

his love. Seven years later they married. The Vice Chairman of China's Disabled Person's Federation hosted their wedding ceremony.

Li Chun never learned to use sign language. But they have invented many signs that only they can understand. Sometimes, a glance is all that is needed to communicate with each other.

Although her body is disabled, Lihua is happy because her love is perfect. Since their marriage Lihua has been busily performing and Li Chun decided to study a postgraduate course. Seldom meeting each other, they often send text messages by mobile phone.

Pursuing the value of life

Although dancing seems to supply her with endless joy and happiness, Tai Lihua knows the importance of knowledge in a modern society and would not allow herself to be left behind. When she turned to 17 years old, she made it her goal to go to the university and began to study with the same persistence she had had for dancing. In 1994, Lihua was admitted by the Decoration and Design Department of Hubei Fine Arts University.

As a disabled actress, she was walking through a thorny path toward success, but it is surely a path lit with sunlight and full of dreams.

In August 1992, the most-acclaimed dancers and musicians gathered in the Sikhala Theatre in Italy to attend The Borderless Civilization Arts Festival. Tai Lihua was the only disabled artist to be invited to the festival and was hailed as 'the ambassador of beauty and humanity'. In September 2000, Tai Lihua and the troupe went to New York to perform in the world famous Carnegie Music Hall. A huge poster of *The Spirit of Peacock* became the only stage photo of a performance from China.

In the Athens Paralympics held in 2004, Tai Lihua's dancing career reached a new height with her passionate performance of *My Dream* at the closing ceremony.

But Tai Lihua takes her achievements lightly. In one of her diary books, she wrote: "The lives of all people are the same. Just like the moon phases, there are always the full moon, gibbous, quarter and crescent, a condition that you can't choose. But you could always choose the angle from which you see your life and see more of a fulfilled life, then you will be able to face the unfulfilled part with a happy and grateful heart - this is my understanding of the true meaning of life."



Kwan-yin of 1,000 Hands

Celebrating 5,000 Years

The Culture of Hongshan

By Li Ruifen

More than 5,000 years ago, an ancient civilization flourished in the mountains and forests of northern China. These ancestors of the Chinese nation created primitive forms of society, religion, music, and even a form of writing. Uncovered for the first time in 1935 in Chifeng, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, the civilization was officially named Hongshan Culture (Culture of Red Mountain) in 1955.

The Hongshan Culture was part of the New Stone Age. It developed 5,000 to 6,000 years ago in the border regions of what is today Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, Liaoning, Hebei and Jilin provinces. Credited with the creation of the earliest religious totems, such as dragon and phoenix, and making the earliest religious ornaments, musical instruments and tools, Hongshan Culture is described by some archaeologists as one of the earliest cradles of Chinese civilization.

To mark the 50th anniversary of the official recognition of Hongshan Culture, an exhibition is currently underway, jointly organized by the China Collector's Association and the China Ceramics Museum.

Signs of civilization

According to renowned American anthropologist Clyde Kluckhohn, an advanced civilization should possess three key elements; cities with high walls, writing and centers for conducting complex rituals. Zhu Chengjie, creator of a website devoted to the Hongshan Culture (www.hsw.com), the ancient civilization shows embryonic forms of all three elements.

The relics on show at the China Ceramics Museum are classified into three groups; religious and ritual implements: musical instruments and tools. Most are from private collections. From the jade goddess that changes color with the shifting of the seasons, to the tiny stone saw blades that can still cut glass today, the exhibition, although representing only a fraction of the fruits of this profound ancient culture, is sure to astound visitors.

Making music

Archaeologists have unearthed a variety of musical instruments, including flute-like instruments and percussion instruments. Although no music has been found in written form, there is ample evidence of people playing musical instruments in various activities in the cliff paintings.

According to Zhu Chengjie, music was played not only during ritual activities, but also when people were making religious implements. Every piece of jade and ornaments used in the course of worship were made to the rhythm of the sacred music.

The *dankong di*, a single holed flute-like instrument made of marble has a history of about 4,800 years. The remarkable thing about the instrument is that it has just one hole in its smooth body. According to Hao Fengliang, a collector and webmaster of another website devoted to Hongshan Culture (www.zgbfwh.com), the hole was not punched from the outside, but was made with two drills that moved simultaneously from both sides of the marble toward the middle.

A five-holed flute, *wukong di*, made of chicken bone approximately 5,000 years ago, was found by villagers as they were planting trees in Songshan District, Chifeng. The flute is 15 centimeters long, with a diameter of about 1 centimeter. During its first exhibition in Beijing in 1999, the flute made its first sound after being buried for more than 5,000 years, played by Li Youping, a graduate student at that time and now a professor at Wuhan Conservatory of Music. In October 2000, Professor Xiao Xinghua, of the Central Music Research Institute, actually played a tune on the ancient instrument.

Worshipping heaven

The Chinese nation has a long history of worshipping heaven, which can be dated as far back as the Hongshan Culture. At the Niuheliang site, discovered in Liaoning Province in the 1980s, archeologists unearthed a goddess temple that contained dozens of stone figures, some of which were as tall as an adult. Zhu Chengjie says the temple was built as part of an altar with a series of other buildings and constructions in an accurate pattern of the Eight Diagrams. The builders of this site were buried in the fertile earth along the Liaohe River, but the evidence of the primitive worship is well preserved.

Two eye-catching pieces at the exhibition are a jade goddess figure and a canister made of stone. The 5,000-year-old goddess is a seated figure with protruding eyeballs. Hao Fengliang told *Beijing Today* that the figure demonstrated the advanced technique of the ancient artisans.

Titong, a canister made of a whole piece of stone, appears unremarkable at first sight. However, according to Hao, it was used as a religious implement 5,000 years ago. When unearthed, the canister was upside-down and contained a jade dragon with a pig's head.

Tools of the trade

In the east of Hebei Province, archeologists have discovered an ancient network of workshops used to produce various tools. After two years of excavation, a quantity of knives, arrows and other implements were unearthed from the area, giving archaeologists a detailed picture of how religious objects and musical instruments were manufactured at that time. Although not as finely wrought as the other exhibits on show, these tools played an extremely important role in the development of this mysterious civilization.

A knife with a bone shank and stone edge (*gubing shiren dao*), was used 8,000 years to cut food, bones and even stone. The shank of the knife is made of a whole piece of bone, and the edge consists of four pieces of agate. The extraordinary thing about the knife is it shows that people 8,000 years ago had found a way to adhere agate to bone.

The exhibition of Hongshan Culture is at the China Ceramics Museum at Baguo Temple, Guang'anmen, until March 14.

A woman playing Xun

Photos by Tian Xiaotong



Xun



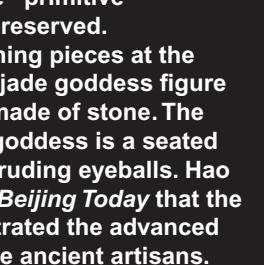
Drum



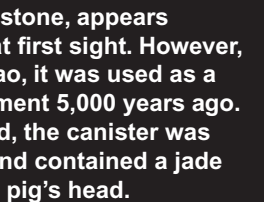
Holy jade figurine



Jade dragon



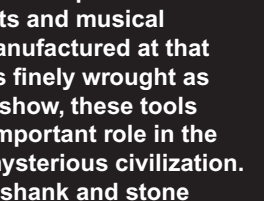
Jade dragon



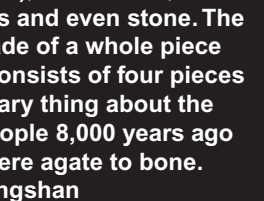
Jade dragon



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The Nine Dragon Tree at the Temple of Heaven

On Beijing's Tree Trail

By Peng Juan

Spring is in the air – a time for blossoming, blooming and tree planting, especially around the National Tree Planting Day on March 12. Beijingers have always liked planting trees and the city is proud of its abundant old trees – in temples, parks and gardens, and on mountaintops. The old giant trees, many with holy and auspicious connotations, used to be worshiped by the people.

A city of old trees

Beijing boasts of the highest concentration of “ancient” trees of any Chinese city. There are approximately 7, 000 trees with a history of more than 300 years, and a further 40,000-plus that are at least 100 years old. Some have withstood the city's harsh climate for almost a millennium.

In Beijing's ancient temples, parks and gardens, visitors will encounter ancient giants planted to create an auspicious atmosphere and beautify the surroundings. The old trees are living witnesses to the history of these sites, and give the impression of having traveled several hundred years back in time.

Ancient Chinese scholar trees, knotted cypresses, ginkgoes and pines are regarded as holy trees in Buddhism and are often planted in pairs along the paths and at the entrances to temples. Some are important landmarks at ancient holy sites, and a few have even been granted titles, such as the Emperor's Tree, the King of Ginkgoes and the Guest-Welcoming Pine.

Living witness of ancient Beijing Cypress

In Chinese literature, the cypress symbolizes the courage and strength of the people, their simple and hard working nature and defiance in the face of aggression. It can grow up to 20 meters in height.

The Imperial Garden, just inside the rear entrance of the Forbidden City, dates back to the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). Once a private retreat for the imperial family, this garden is home to one of Beijing's best known trees, or rather, pairs of trees. Two 400-year-old cypresses, known as the Consort Pine, or “lovers' tree,” grow in front of the Hall of Imperial Peace. They are so named because their roots intertwine, symbolizing harmony between the Emperor and Empress.

The Temple of Heaven is famous for both its unique architecture and its over 60,000 cypresses, among which more than 4,000 are older than 100 years, adding to the solemn atmosphere of the temple. The Nine-Dragon Cypress is more than 500 years old, with thick branches and a twisting trunk said to resemble nine dragons playfully intertwined.

During his visit in 1972, US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger commented, “The US could build a Hall of Prayer for Good Harvest by copying the one in the Temple of Heaven, but it would be impossible to recreate those ancient trees.”

Some cypresses in Zhongshan Park to the west of Tian'anmen Square are said to have been planted during the Liao Dynasty (916-1125). Seven of

the trees are so large in girth that it takes three or four people with arms outstretched to encircle the trunk. The one on the eastern side is particularly unusual, because “the cypress embraces closely with a scholar tree”. Although no traces of the old Liao architecture remain, the ancient cypresses serve as a reminder of the city's long history.

In the courtyard of the Confucian Temple, on Guozijian Jie, are several cypresses over 100 years old. One of these is known as Chujianbai (Touch Evil Tree). The name is associated with a story about a high ranking official of the Ming Dynasty named Yan Song. One day, Yan Song came to the temple to pray to Confucius on behalf of the emperor. As he passed the cypress, one of its branches knocked his hat to the ground. Yan Song later disgraced himself by refusing to send troops to repel Mongolian invaders attacking Beijing, so the tree was deemed to have the ability to discern evil people from good.

Scholar tree

The scholar tree is a symbol of good fortune, joy and well-being. It is the longest living tree of all the ancient trees and has been eulogized as one of the “three scenes of ancient Beijing,” together with the purple vine and siheyuan.

There are more than 5,800 old trees around the Fragrant Hills area. Three scholar trees in front of the former residence of Cao Xueqin, the author of *A Dream of Red Mansions*, are particularly famous.

Located 35 kilometers west of Beijing, the Jietai Temple, built some 1,300 years ago, is renowned for its old trees, which are the subject of many songs. The 1,000-year-old scholar tree in the temple courtyard is known as the protector of Buddhism.

By the eastern pathway on Jingshan, the hill just north of the Forbidden City, there stands a diminutive scholar tree. It was here that the last emperor of the Ming Dynasty, Chong Zhen, hung himself with his belt in March 1644 as the Manchu swept into Beijing.

At Beihai Park, an ancient scholar tree in the courtyard of Hua-fangzhai is believed to have been planted during the Tang Dynasty (618-907). Another ancient scholar tree near the Broken Bridge in the Forbidden City is said to have been planted before 1125.

Ginkgo and pine

The Emperor's Tree in the 1,600-year-old Tanzhe Temple, Mentougou District, is known as the oldest holy tree in China. Planted in the Liao Dynasty, the Emperor's Tree was said to grow a new branch at the beginning of the reign of each new emperor during the Ming and Qing dynasties, hence its name.

Famous pine trees include the Nine-Dragon Tree in Jietai Temple, which has nine branches reaching up to the sky like nine flying dragons and the Moving Tree which trembles even when only one branch is slightly touched. At Yan-shou Temple in Changping District stands the 800-year-old Panlong Pine, its twisted branches resembling a winding dragon.

What's New

By Tom Spearman
CD

The Who: Then and Now



If you don't like this, you can f-f-fade away. The Beatles and even the Rolling Stones were comparatively wholesome boys compared to The Who, one of the more rebellious big British bands of the 1960s. This greatest hits album is an ideal tour through their back catalogue for those unfamiliar with the band, running from 1964 up to 1981's *You Better You Bet* and adding a couple of new bonus tracks. Or at least there are supposed to be a couple of new tracks, but the Beijing version of this release only offers one. It's frustrating as the one included here is *Real Good Looking Boy* which has been rightly lambasted as tired, pointless and generally awful. No sign of *Old Red Wine*, which is supposed to be quite good. Oh well, it would have to go some anyway to match the likes of *Won't Get Fooled Again*.

DVD

Vera Drake



Described by Slate as a "marathon of misery" this certainly isn't easy going. But it's essential viewing simply because it's one of those rare movies that strips away the mythmaking of Hollywood and demands your involvement and judgement of a serious issue. And the humanity of the film easily overcomes any unease about the subject matter. Vera Drake is an all round good soul in London's East End in the 1950s. She also performs abortions, illegal in the UK at that time, to "help out girls in trouble." Needless to say, she gets caught and the full force of the law and a hypocritical society comes down upon her. Imelda Staunton is remarkable in the leading role, partly because it's hard to play such a salt of the earth character without being annoying. Some were surprised that she was nominated for an Oscar, given the reactionary moral climate of George Bush's America, but her performance, and the film, simply cannot be ignored.

My Own Private Idaho



For some, this was the high point of River Phoenix's career, and was regarded as a sign of what he might have achieved had he not died tragically young just a few years later. He plays Mike, a young street hustler who befriends fellow hustler and rebellious rich kid Scott, played, somewhat improbably, by Keanu Reeves, who was better known at the time for being able to look pretty and say "dude." Reeves proved he might be able to act after all, but the movie belongs to Phoenix who is funny and believable. The film is based loosely on the plot of Shakespeare's Henry IV, but it's essentially a touching and comic road movie. The music and photography are also superb.



Songbird in Beijing

By Pan Hao

Nothing is more fun than going to a live concert, especially when Norah Jones is playing. She performed at Beijing Workers Stadium on Monday night, impressing everyone with her jazzy, country-colored music style and the lively performance of her excellent band.

The stadium was packed with fans by eight o'clock, and the people got exited and kept shouting her name until Ms. Jones first stepped onto the stage, sat down at her piano and started to play.

Mellow was the word, as the music flowed from her fingers, Jones slowly adding her vocals to the melody. The stage had been carefully set up and arranged in a cozy way, using some soft, dark lights. It was more than comfortable to watch, although at times you couldn't help closing your eyes and just letting the music flow over you. Jones played the tunes from her latest album, *Feels Like Home*, such as *What Am I to You*, *Humble Me* and *Cheerful Sunrise*. The live version of *In the Morning* was transformed into a rhythmic fantasy at the end. The drummer Andrew Borger played some very fine beats that made you wonder where he put the punctuations, and that stole the balance from the audience while the band still kept the groove going.

The band was tight, and each member could be heard clearly. Robbie McIntosh played a killer slide guitar that helped form the country theme, and the guitar sound was smooth. Meanwhile, guitarist Adam Levy also showed his jazzy side. The band accompanied Jones's luscious vocals perfectly. Happy to please the crowd, Jones also played some tracks from her Grammy-laden debut album, *Come Away With Me*. Although she is not perhaps one of the more distinctive songwriters, she definitely has the ability to cope with a wide range of music styles, including jazz, country, soul and folk-pop music. The band played a few cover versions too. Overall, Norah Jones had an engaging, intelligent and lively performance style. She talked to the audience, made jokes and danced sometimes, all part of the fun of a concert.

Photos by Cui Jun

Spoiled Wife, Amiable Play

By Jacqueline Yu

Though it may sound experimental, *A Home with A Spoiled Wife*, has a more traditional and less challenging core. It's on show at the mini theatre in People's Art Theatre till April 1.

The drama is based on a British play written by H. Davis and adapted by Zhang Zhaohui and Wu Zhuhong for Beijing People's Art Theatre. The original story followed the lives of a wealthy family in Victorian Britain, and this version is similar except that it's set in Beijing.

The black square mini theatre is decorated as a contemporary Chinese middle-class living room in the suburbs of Beijing. At the start, the audience is separated from the stage by two layers of gauze, colored purple by the light. As Luo Xiuxiu, the central character of the play, enters the stage, the gauze curtain slowly rises and reveals the room.

Xiuxiu is a babysitter and cleaner in the house, which is owned by a couple, He Feifei (the wife) and Li Dahong (a wealthy businessman who can afford to spend half the week at home), along with their four-year-old son. Having relied on Xiuxiu for four years, Feifei has been spoiled and now needs her help with almost everything.



Photo by Tian Yufeng

This serenity is broken by the arrival of He Xiaogang, Feifei's old brother, who is determined to rouse his sister from her bad habits. At the same time, he falls in love with Xiuxiu.

A series of witty arguments and misunderstandings ensue, before Feifei finally realizes that she must show her love for her family without using Xiuxiu to do all the hard work.

The adaptation relies on some well known sayings for humor and the actors were all clearly comfortable within their parts. Liu Xiaorong played He Feifei, with Bao Dazhi as the husband who tolerates his wife's laziness, and Fu Yao as Xiuxiu and Wang Ning as the trouble-making brother.

A light comedy such as this makes for a pleasant way to spend an evening. "We are not trying to condemn someone, just to express our slight worry for them, that's it," Gu Wei, the play's director wrote in the program sheet. "We just want to give a feeling like saying, 'Dear, please don't do that again, okay?'"

The Beautiful Punk Girls

By Wang Yao

A punk performance by girl bands was held at the Nameless Highland bar last Saturday, with the four bands offering various

styles. It soon became clear to listeners that the slim and beautiful girls were just as able to release eruptive energy as the boys.

Ourselves Beside Me consisted of vocalist Yang Fan, bassist Liu Min and one male member on drums, Liu Bao. The band had a garage and new wave sound and people could hear influences from veteran Japanese punk band Shannon Knife.

In the song *It's Sometime Somebody Something Missing*, Liu and

Yang sang different, contrasting chords. Liu had a clear, ringing and powerful voice, and she was mainly responsible for the high-pitched part. Yang had a comparatively low tempo, and she used her voice to indicate struggle and obstinacy. *Get It Back To You* had a strong guitar and bass line. Their final song, *Psycho*, had heavy and impressive drum beats. The drum and the bass formed an atmosphere of tension and suspense. And the guitar sound gave a sense of a person who had lost his mind.

Chong Su Diao Xiang De Quan Li, a post-punk band, consisted of bass player Liu Min,

drummer Ma Yi and lead singer and guitarist Hua Dong. Initially, people thought their style was similar to Ourselves Beside Me, seeing as Liu Min was

and gained new insights into their music, the band now have a style combining ska and hardcore. At the beginning, people just thought the band was good

at shouting and cursing. However, the band's character gradually came across. Beautiful lead vocalist Zhang Jing even showed an emotional and sensitive side. She could use her voice to sing softly, then shift into a strange and enchanting sound and suddenly a fierce squeal. This was important and distinctive, as some punk bands are merely capable of shouting without having any tune. Zhang Jing's voice was a little bit hoarse but her versatility was outstanding. The band

had two guitar players and their sound was powerful, set against the low tempo bass. This performance was the best of the night. There was no pretense to the songs, just a simple start and gradual build to a climax, at which point they naturally shifted into jumping around and dancing wildly.

The final band was MO69, a Japanese hardcore punk band. The bass player and guitarist were Japanese students, Neno and Tachan. The drummer was a student named Marek from Belarus. There's not much to say about their music, except that it was of a classic Japanese hardcore style.



From left to right, Zhang Jing of Bing Qi Lin Ge Zi, Yang Fan from Ourselves Beside Me, and Liu Min

Photos by Demon.Q

Accounting Master's

Emphasizes Ethics

By Xie Lixue

Accountants, the money managers of corporations, play an important role in business. This is particularly true when a bankruptcy or financial crisis happens in a major enterprise, such as the recent examples of Enron, WorldCom or Adelphia.

The new MPAcc (Master of Professional Accounting) is labeled as the MBA of business accounting. More than twenty universities have introduced the certificate, following its approval by the National Academic Degree Committee and Ministry of Education. Professional ethics, principles and psychological training are high-

lighted in the program.

Abundant and short

There are few comprehensive university that do not offer a major in accounting, and to date, there are some 12 million practicing accountants throughout the country. Among these, 58,000 hold qualification certificates, but only 1,100 possess a master's degree. This suggests that there are potentially more than 100,000 positions for qualified professional accountants.

Huang Wen, senior HR manager of PricewaterhouseCoopers China said that although there have been a large number of job opportunities for graduate students in recent years, the company welcomes the increasing

numbers of domestic managers at senior levels.

"It was hard to find those properly qualified people before. Generally, most professional managers had to learn how to keep accounts on the job."

Cases and principles

In response to the disadvantages evident in the courses being offered and the demands of business, the Academic Degree Committee and Ministry of Education introduced the practical-oriented MPAcc.

For the first group of students in 2005, four directions are available: CFO (Chief Financial Officer), CPA (Certified Public Accounting), fraud auditing and forensic accounting, costing and finance management.

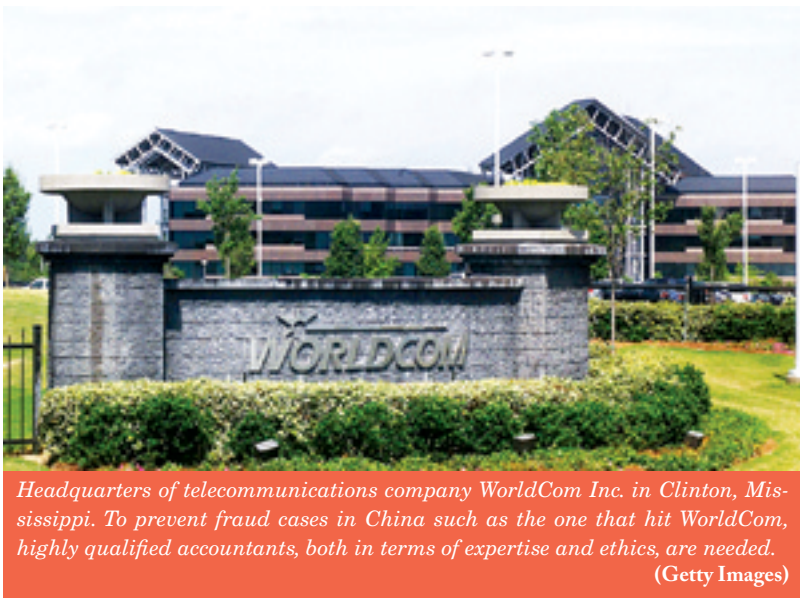
Li Ruoshan, a member of the MPAcc Education Committee and professor at Shanghai's Fudan University, said MPAcc was different with the general accounting masters in schools. "The former one is mainly at the academic aspect, such as theoretical research, tendency of global development or exam the solutions for making policies etc. But the MPAcc emphasizes case-analysis and how to use what they learnt."

For instance, Li introduced, one case in books was the latest news reported on media, saying that a financial staff in Shanghai misappropriated 92 million yuan. "From the case, we discuss not only reasons but also remind our students

to abide our moral code."

Comparison with other certificates

As the newest master's certificate available in the Chinese market, the MPAcc is not so well known as CPA, ACCA (Association of Chartered Certified Accountants) or AIA (Association of International Accountants) among the domestic professionals. But with the graduation of 1,900 students out of 3,600 applicants in the coming three to four years, the MPAcc program will expand its influence and attract more attention, says Yuan Wei, vice-director of the MPAcc Education Committee and vice president of Renmin University told *Beijing Today* on Tuesday.



Headquarters of telecommunications company WorldCom Inc. in Clinton, Mississippi. To prevent fraud cases in China such as the one that hit WorldCom, highly qualified accountants, both in terms of expertise and ethics, are needed. (Getty Images)

Seeking Employment

A swimming coach from Moldova is looking for a job in Beijing. Qualifications as: Coach/Judge at National Standard; Olympian (Ranked 12th in the world in 1995), World Cup Silver Medallist; Experienced children's coach at all levels; Qualified driver (B, C, D, E categories), bodybuilding instructor; Proficient in Russian, English, Romanian, Ukrainian.

Contact Max Cazmirciuc at: 13126711168 or email: mcazmirciuc@yahoo.com

Web design graduates are available. For details visit: www.inhb.com, or call Liu or Tang at: 0311-3160000. Email: luogq@heinfo.net

Laid-off workers are providing PC maintenance services such as system upgrade, virus detection and removal, data copying and recovering, system utilization and security. Call: 6732 7217

Female Beijinger, 39, has a decade's experience in import-export business, human resources management, interpretation and secretarial work. I have a good command of computer skills and am good at English, both writing and speaking. Mobile: 13611163663

A retired president and CEO of two Canadian companies interested in teaching English or French in China. Cellphone: 1352 0549132, email: Jeanguyfurois@aol.com

Situations Vacant

Shangqiu Fuyuan Rubio Bio-engineering Co. in Henan Province is looking for marketing professionals, fine chemical professionals, chemical analyzers, IT software and network developers, pharmaceutical professionals and nutrition analyzers.

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The Southern Industrial Zone, Bincheng District, Binzhou, Shandong Province, is looking for two reps and five consultants in Beijing. Contact: Mr. Chen at 13561569235

(You are welcome to send positions offered and wanted info freely to: ayi@ynet.com. Beijing Today does not take any responsibility for the accuracy and authenticity of the information published in this column.)

A Beijing-based English newspaper is looking for reporters, freelancers and editors.

Chinese applicants should have university degrees in English or related majors and media experience.

Foreigners from the UK and US with relevant media experience preferred.

Please send your resumes and writing samples to: hr@ynet.com

DV Becomes Mainstream

By Xie Lixue

With the widespread acceptance of DV (digital video), shooting movies is no longer the preserve of professional directors and cinematographers. Since the success of the *Blair Witch Project* and *Dancer in the Dark*, both shot using hand-held DV cameras, DV products have seen a dramatic rise in popularity, both among film industry professionals, in media workshops, and with amateurs.

Meanwhile, thanks to endorsement by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security as one of nine "new careers" last December, the number of people seeking to specialize in DV production has soared.

According to a survey conducted by DV China, a company supporting the development of DV industry in China, sales of small DV cameras in China in 2003 was 604,000, an increase of 57 percent on 2002. They predict the figure will reach 3 million in 2007, the same as the sales volume of personal computers in 2003.

Currently, there are some 3 million people working in the media industry in China, 30

percent of whom are involved in film production. One out of ten of these are currently using DV.

Zhang Hong, director of a DV production company, told *Beijing Today* that all TV channels in China would be screening digital programs by the year 2015, thus demand for production crews is expected to further rise in the next decade.

"An excellent DV production requires expertise of film production and editing, DV shooting and lighting technology, special effects, post-production and output process and disc writing and recording technology," Zhang said.

In addition, with the development of computer and electronic equipment, the requirement for motion pictures in all areas has grown rapidly, especially in some big corporations. They set up media production teams to promote their image, brand and products. Sectors such as advertising, multi-media teaching and interactive programs require a large number of professionals to operate DV cameras and to produce various works.



Photo by dvchina.com.cn



Thirty eight companies, including overseas multinationals and domestic conglomerates, offered more than 1,000 jobs at a female job fair in Beijing on March 6.

Photo by Junyao

By Xie Lixue

On March 2 and 6, two special job fairs targeting female job seekers attracted tens of thousands of young women, especially new graduates, in Beijing and Shanghai. Unlike a similar fair in November 2004 in Beijing, many more companies participated, offering a wider range of positions.

In Beijing on March 2, a total of 53 companies offered 700 positions, ranging from receptionists, secretaries, preschool teachers, to officers in financial, technological, legal and political areas.

In Shanghai, an annual salary bottom of 30,000 yuan was the mark. Of the 1,000 jobs offered, more than half were in foreign invested companies, along with 38 from famous national or for-

Female Job Fairs, Discrimination or Preference?

eign companies, such as OBI (China) Management System, Ping An Insurance and Nissay-SVA Life Insurance.

It is popularly accepted that gender discrimination still makes it hard for women to compete for jobs. The failure of the first such fair in Beijing,

where only five companies participated, emphasized this point.

One female graduate from Tianjin University of Finance and Economics, said that she would get more chances to be hired at a fair for women only.

Sammy Wang, an employee in an IT company,

told *Beijing Today* that such fairs made it easier to find a job suitable for career development.

"Absolutely yes," another graduate said, "I majored in information engineering, but am still wondering which job is appropriate for me. I have taken the career test and the advisors suggested I seek a management position. So now I have a clue."

However, according to Wen Shufeng, director of the career guidance center at Renmin University, women have no disadvantage in finding good jobs. In fact, the percentage of female graduates from his school finding jobs was 0.3 higher than that of males in recent years.

"Confidence is the key." Wen insists.

Finding Qualified Certificates

(Continued from last week)

BEC (Business English Certificate)

BEC, known as business English certificate, was organized by the University of Cambridge and has been commonly recognized as the English proficiency tests under the international business context around the world. There are three BEC exams - BEC Preliminary, BEC Vantage and BEC Higher, so candidates can choose the level according to their English skills and professional needs. Reading, writing, listening and speaking are the four items for each level.

Now many universities offer

courses in business English using BEC textbooks, so the materials for preparing for the exams are easy to find. Every year, candidates can apply before March 20 for exams in May, or before September 20 for those in November.

The exam dates for 2005 are: May 14 and November 19 for BEC preliminary, May 28 and December 3 for BEC vantage, and May 21 and November 26 for BEC higher. For the application and testing centers, see www.neea.edu.cn.

CPA (Certified Public Accountant)

As a domestic qualification exam

for accountants, the first CPA test was conducted in China in 1993, organized by the Beijing Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Currently, the total number of certificate holders is 107,000, after 13 exams.

Applicants who graduated at least from professional colleges, or possess technical titles of accounting can apply for the 2005 exam at the beginning of April. The subjects include accounting, auditing, management of financial affairs, and laws to economy and tax. The official test website: www.bicpa.org.cn provides information and policies for the applicants.

"Throughout our development, the research schools that comprised the original university of 1946, together with the research schools established since then, have maintained a distinct identity within the university as the Institute of Advanced Studies," said Keith Houghton, dean of the Faculty of Economy and Commerce at ANU.

Houghton and Iain Watt, associate director of the university's International Development Division of Student Recruitment and International Education, took part in *Beijing Today's* "Splendid Australia" activity over the past two weeks and provided a wealth of useful information.

Basics, strengths:

Can you tell me the advantages of your university com-

8,000 undergraduates and maybe 4,000 to 5,000 postgraduates. Of these, some 25 percent or so (about 3,000) are international students and of these maybe 700 are from the PRC.

Majors:

What is the No.1 major in your school? Do students who graduate from that program find it easy to get a job?

—little voice

Accounting and finance are the courses most students take, but we also have a very famous school of economics. Nearly 95 percent of students get a job within three months of graduation or do further study. Some students are employed in their home country or a third country because the ANU degree is well known internationally.



ANU: Research Core and Much More



Students on campus

pared with other Australian universities? —xinghua001

ANU is universally regarded as one of the premier research universities in the world. We are currently redesigning our UG courses to ensure that all UG students get an opportunity to interact with our world-class researchers.

Combine this with a perfect environment for study (quiet, clean and safe), our approach of encouraging students to think independently and back their own choices, and friendly Australian people, you have a combination that cannot be found elsewhere.

ANU is a smaller university than our main competitors (Sydney, Melbourne, UNSW, Queensland), so students get a much more personal experience. They are treated as individuals and of course have access to all the facilities, not just at Australia's National University, but also in Australia's capital (e.g. national library, museum, parliament, etc.).

How many colleges and faculties does Australian National University have? Which is the best one? —JackieZhang

It is very hard to say which faculties or schools at ANU are the "best." ANU last year asked some 300 world leading researchers to assess ANU's research across all the disciplines in which we do research.

ANU was ranked in the top 25 universities in the world by most assessors in the following disciplines: Asian and Pacific studies; astronomy and astrophysics; Australian indigenous studies; biological sciences; earth sciences; history and archaeology; information sciences and engineering; language and culture; law; mathematics; philosophy; physical sciences; and studies in human society.

How many Chinese students does ANU have at present? —rookie

ANU currently has about

<http://www.anu.edu.au/ieo/ivsp/apply.html> for more information.

Facilities and student life:

What kinds of dormitories do you provide international students?

—stawberry125

ANU has about 3,000 student accommodation rooms. There is a lot of competition for on-campus accommodation, so if you are planning to come to ANU apply early for accommodation.

Self-catering and catered options are available. These have single fully furnished study bedrooms. All residences are centrally heated and carpeted and have telephone and voicemail access.

If you cook for yourself, the cost is about AU\$120 per week. If the cooking is done for you, the cost is around AU\$260 per week.

What entertainment facilities are available? How many communities are there on campus? Are there communities organized by Chinese students?

—playgirl

Our campus is very close to the city, so all the entertainment you could want like bars, restaurants, cinemas, nightclubs, shops are all walking distance from campus.

There is also a lively on-campus life, as 25 percent of our students live on campus. There are hundreds of student clubs, and several organized by Chinese students. For an example, check out http://clubs.anu.edu.au/clubs/ANU_China_Club/.

Can students use multi-media facilities for their studies? How do teachers teach students?

—telephone

We do not offer courses by distance learning (e.g. on-line). Our on-campus students have access 24/7 to computer labs where they can prepare assignments, do research on the Internet and review teachers' notes and PowerPoint slides. We also use on-line discussion forums in addition to the lectures and classes. There is no additional cost to students to use the computer facilities.

Opinions and advice:

Are there any bogus schools in Aus-

When the Australian National University (ANU) was established by an act of the parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia in 1946, it was the country's only full-time research university.

Early after its foundation, ANU completely focused on postgraduate research and study and did not offer undergraduate education programs. In 1960, it merged with Canberra University College and added undergraduate courses. Another merger with the Canberra Institute of the Arts, comprising the Canberra School of Art and the Canberra School of Music, in 1993 gave the university excellent music and art programs and widened the range of its courses.



Iain Watt in Beijing Today's Study Abroad Salon studio

tralia now? What influence have they had on qualified universities? What do you think of these bogus schools? Why are they able to survive?

—blueblue

There are unapproved institutions operating in every country — despite the best efforts of governments, it is not possible to prevent people from breaking the law. Australia is the only country in the world that has enacted an act of parliament (the ESOS Act) specifically to protect the rights of international students in Australia. Genuine students should focus on institutions that are well known. Any questions can be answered by the education section of the Australian Embassy in Beijing (6532 2331).

Nowadays, increasing numbers of Chinese students are rushing to study abroad. What do you think about this trend?

—cold past

Studying abroad is a very important decision. Students who propose to study abroad need to very carefully consider the university and program they select. Given the cost of

an overseas qualification, it is worth paying a little extra to get top quality. A degree from a leading, world-class university like ANU will be of much greater value to a student than one from a lesser-known institution. The study environment is also very important.

What great majors do you suggest Chinese students study? Why? —greentea

Each student should choose his or her majors on the basis of their own interests and abilities. It also depends on whether you wish to pursue a research career or go into the business world. I can only suggest that you choose something that is top quality and if possible has something special or different about it that will distinguish you from others who might in the future be competing with you for a job or research place.

(Edited By Zhang Nan)

Ask Ayi:

Q: I've just learned that students can apply for loans to study in New Zealand from CITIC Industrial Bank. How much can I apply for and what is the time limitation? How should I repay the money? —greyC

A: Students who will enroll directly in degree courses when they get to New Zealand can apply for 300,000 yuan in loans. Students who need to take language or other preparatory courses before starting their degrees can apply for 500,000 to 600,000 yuan in loans.

The time limitations on the loans are three to six years. You can repay the money every month, every quarter or every year. If you have to stop your studies or complete your studies ahead of schedule, you can bring your schedule of repayment forward.

Applicants should get letters from the New Zealand Immigration Service office to prove they have been given visas and then present those letters to the bank. The bank will allow loan holders to repay ahead of schedule only after confirming with the New Zealand Immigration Service office that the student has stopped their studies.

Q: My grandson will complete his studies at the University of Adelaide this summer. He wants to stay in Australia and work there. Can his university help him find a job? —HSE

A: The University of Adelaide has a career service office on campus. Your grandson can go there for help.

The career service office arranges on-campus presentations, workshops and seminars, and lists on its Web pages job opportunities including graduate, full-time, part-time, vacation work and undergraduate opportunities.

The office also provides guidance for students making career and study choices, skills workshops in areas such as resumé writing, job interviews and career planning, and a regular calendar of events including annual career fairs.

(Edited By Zhang Nan)

Seven Top Dutch Business Schools Offer Scholarships

By Zhang Nan

Seven top business schools in the Netherlands will run an MBA scholarship project for Chinese students this spring in conjunction with CSC-SE-Neso Beijing. The project includes 16 scholarships for students planning to enroll in MBA courses and related programs and offers a total of 2 million yuan in funding.

The scholarships are available to only 16 Chinese students.

Interested students are welcomed to apply before the deadline in mid-May. Applicants should have undergraduate degrees or higher, relatively high IELTS scores (above 6.0) and excellent scores on the GMAT. Cheng Cheng, marketing manager at Neso Beijing, told *Beijing Youth Daily* this week that due to fierce competition, applicants should have GMAT scores of at least 700 to have a good chance.

Students applying for MBA courses are required to have at least two years of related work experience. Professional experience will also work to the advantage of students applying for master's degree courses in international finance.

The seven schools will begin the selection process in June and release the names of the lucky scholarship winners in July. Further details are available at: www.nesobeijing.com.

US Hikes Visa Charges

By Zhang Nan

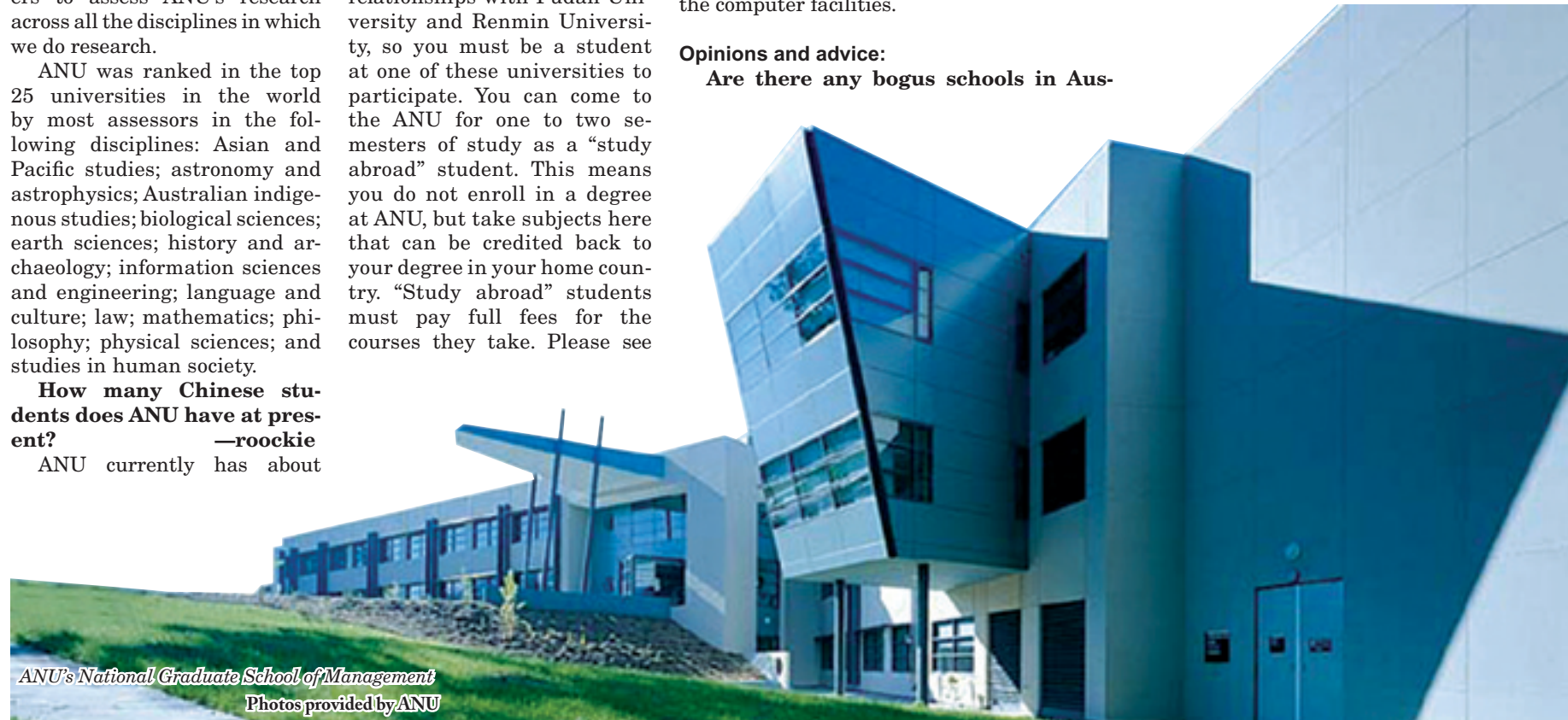
The United States has dramatically raised the fees for applying for entry to the country in a policy that went into effect on Tuesday.

The cost of applying for an immigration visa has been hiked to \$375 from \$100, while the charge for passport document inspection is now \$60, up from \$45.

The US Embassy's visa office will also be charging \$12 commissions on passport applications and \$45 on immigration visa applications.

Applicants for L-1 (intracompany transferees) and H-1B (temporary workers) will have to pay an additional \$500 charge for prevention of provision of false information. Those charges will be levied when visa holders hand in their applications or change employers.

ANU's National Graduate School of Management
Photos provided by ANU



By Lu Pinrou

First it was one of Beijing's most popular restaurant strips and late-night dining spots. Then it was rendered rubble. And then it was replaced by huge, styleless apartment blocks.

Now Guijie, also known as Ghost Street or Dongzhimennei, is back. While the western end of the street managed to hang on through the destruction (though it lost some of its former charm), the eastern end remained a blank slate for nearly two years before going through a recent revival. Turning west from the Dongzhimen traffic circle is two blocks of new restaurants, mostly on the north side of the street, that offer a wide variety of fare.

Some will still miss the glorious days of Ghost Street, but the less nostalgic may find it a more interesting place to eat than ever.

ter value for a little less taste and sometimes funky textures.

The menu also includes regular hotpot items like thin slices of beef and mutton and vegetables. For dipping, Yeshengjun offers common *majiang*, or sesame paste sauce, as well as a special house concoction based on mushroom powder that has a slightly spicy, fresh flavor.

Where: Building No. 15, Dongzhimennei Dajie **Open:** 24 hours **Average Cost:** 50 yuan **Tel:** 8406 1645

Bridge to Yunnan

Offering a welcome break from the oil-laden, heavy fare that dominates Guijie, the **Yunnan Guoqiao Mixian** restaurant specializes in the dish for which it's named, Yunnan Province's legendary "cross the bridge" noodles.

Customers watch their noodles being made at their tables as the sounds of Yunnan folk songs float in the background. First, a large pottery bowl con-



Carnivore's paradise:
Rio Brazilian BBQ

Rising

Fish Bake

The plainly decorated **Dumenchong** restaurant is named after its owner, Xu Chong, who has won the Mr. World event and is now a professional entertainer. In contrast to its unremarkable appearance, the food is definitely noteworthy. A sign over the door claims it serves Jianghu cuisine, an inventive school that shows the creativity of the chef, Xu explained. The star of the show is the broiled fish, or *kao yu*, a recent smash culinary hit in its native Chongqing making its Beijing debut at this eatery.

The no-frills approach to decor filters down to the surprisingly simple menu. The broiled fish, priced by size and type, is offered numb and spicy (*mala*), with pickled chilies, with lobster sauce and with pickled cabbage. Otherwise there is a small selection of stir-fried side dishes, mostly priced around 18 yuan, and a short drink list.

Specialization appears to work to Dumenchong's favor, because the broiled fish is superb. To make it, still-flapping fresh fish is marinated, heavily seasoned and broiled over a charcoal fire. When done, the fish is served on a steel plate brimming with oil and chilies or pickled vegetables.

It is markedly unlike and vastly superior to now-commonplace *shuizhu yu*, or hot oil fish, with its more complex, layered flavor and meatier texture that comes from the natural drying of the broiling process.

Vegetables can also be added to the mix to make the fish more like a conventional hotpot. No mere raw veggies, these are also seasoned and broiled before they go onto the plate. The broiling theme even carries over to the materials for stir-fried dishes, giving standards an unusually smoky, rich taste.

Where: No. 15, Dongzhimen Nei Dajie **Open:** 24 hours **Average Cost:** 40 yuan **Tel:** 8406 2040

House of Wild Mushrooms

Next door to Dumenchong stands another restaurant that takes standard hotpot and turns it on its head. **Yeshengjun**, which means wild mushroom, serves up a healthy alternative to predictable Sichuan-style hotpot. The key is the mushroom broth, chock full of flavor and natural goodness.

The menu runs the gamut of mushrooms, which are cooked into four types of broth, from basic mushroom soup to that soup with black chicken (*wuji*), turtle or both. All the broths are soothing, redolent of mushroom and have an appetizing nut-brown color.

The fungal choices come either fresh-frozen or salted. Frozen ones have stronger aroma and flavor, but cost a bit more, ranging from 26 yuan to 128 yuan. The salted ones offer bet-

from the

Ashes

taining rice noodles is heated. A server than fills the bowl with boiling broth with a thin layer of oil floating on top, along with vegetables, meat, ham, mushrooms, raw eggs and other items as ordered.

After a few minutes, the whole thing is ready. The soup comes out light and flavorful, the meat tender, the vegetables crisp and the noodles fresh, and the whole thing stays warm throughout the meal. The secret is that thin layer of oil, which traps the heat inside the broth.

The menu also includes plenty of other famed Yunnan delicacies, such as *qiguo ji*, or chicken



Chongqing-style broiled fish
(kaoyu) at Dumenchong



Songrong mushrooms
at Yeshengjun

steamed in hotpot. The steamed chicken is stewed with medicinal herbs for added flavor and nutrition (38-48 yuan). Other specialties of the exotic province include mushrooms stir-fried with prized Yunnan ham (68 yuan), and deep-fried bamboo worms (68 yuan).

Where: Building No. 15, Dongzhimen Nei Dajie **Open:** 24 hours **Average Cost:** 30 yuan **Tel:** 8406 4497

She Sells Seashells

Nanhai Guniang, aka the Girl at the Beach, serves up seafood and Cantonese fare, including dim sum. It is the kind of place that would seem run-of-the-mill in many neighborhoods but manages to stand out on Guijie.

This girl offers a vast range of choices, from basic hotpot and dishes to upscale seafood, cooked

pretty well and sold at fair prices. The seafood section of the menu is bounteous, including such highlights as meaty crabs flown up fresh from distant Guangxi.

Another house special is the *baihua lianlian zhang*, or lotus root filled with mashed shrimp. The combination of crisp lotus root and smooth shrimp meat is a texture sensation and the whole thing is topped with a rich abalone sauce. Pretty sophisticated fare for 28 yuan.

The Cantonese classic baked goose is done well here, with crispy skin, tender flesh and relatively little grease, at a price of 30 yuan.

Nanhai Guniang is hardly the place for steeping in Guijie's classic, somewhat seedy late night food culture, but as a choice for a business dinner, it is one of the better picks of the street.

Where: Building No. 5, Dongzhimen Nei Dajie **Open:** 24 hours **Average cost:** 60 yuan **Tel:** 8406 1848

All You Can Meat

Churrasco, or Brazilian-style barbecue, has come to Guijie in the form of the **Rio Brazilian BBQ** restaurant, which has the distinction of being the first Western restaurant on the street.

It has been doing good business not only because of its novelty, but also because it serves massive amounts of meat and other foods in a relaxing environment. Lamps hang from bamboo vines, the walls are lined with Brazilian football uniforms, photos of parties past and plenty of other nick-nacks, while the sounds of Latin music fills the air.



Spicy crabs
(xianglaxie) at
Girl at the Beach

In typical churrasco form, servers walk the floor wielding huge skewers of grilled meat, which they then carve into slices on diners' plates. A house favorite is the succulent rump roast. To go with all the flesh, the restaurant offers around 40 kinds of salads and side dishes to pick and choose from.

Rio Brazilian BBQ is currently running a special deal for lunch and late dinners (meaning after 9:30 pm) of 38 yuan per person, including one soft drink or draft beer. It's not the most authentic take on Brazilian barbecue in town, but it is a welcome, different addition to Guijie.

Where: Building No. 5, Dongzhimen Nei Dajie **Open:** noon - late **Average cost:** 60 yuan **Tel:** 8406 4368

Go for Guizhou

The **Miaoling Suantangyu** restaurant is decked out to replicate a village of the Miao people and specializes in hotpots from their home territory of Guizhou. The house special is the most famous kind of Guizhou hotpot - *suantangyu*, or sour soup fish. The bracing red broth is made from fermented tomatoes and grains, not vinegar, which results in a nourishing soup that is almost as good on its own as it is as hotpot base. And for only 18 yuan, it's a good deal.

Another popular choice is the creative *laziji*, or spicy chicken, hotpot (68 yuan). To make it, dried chilies are softened in water, pulverized and then stir-fried in oil with chicken for more than an hour so that the bird soaks up all the flavor and adds its own taste to the oil. The finished meat is mighty spicy and likely to prove addictive to heat lovers.

Outside of hotpot, the restaurant also offers some other Guizhou specialties, like *guailu chaofan* (stir-fried rice with chilies and lobster sauce), priced at just 8 yuan. Wash it down with a 3 yuan glass of mild home-made *mijiu* rice wine.

Where: No. 230, Dongzhimen Nei Dajie **Open:** 10 am - late **Average Cost:** 50 yuan **Tel:** 8406 0945

Never Too Early for Ice Cream

By Dong Nan

Beijing has yet to lose the chill in its air, but Nestle is not holding back and recently released a line-up of 29 new ice cream products for the 2005 frozen confection season.

"Nestle's new ice cream products for 2005 will entice consumers into a world of Nestle's magical ice cream pleasure," said Josef Mueller, Nestle head for the Greater China Region.

Two stand-outs are the X Crunch Black Way and X Crunch White Way (*heidao* and *baidao*, 1.5 yuan), both made with a patent-protected process to put crisp, sweet coatings over opposite flavors of ice cream. The X Crunch Rock 'n' Roll (*yaogun*, 2.5 yuan) is more radical, with an ice cream sandwich base and chocolate-coated top.

Frozen coffee fans may get a kick out of the Tropical Squeeze Cappuccino Coffee (*xiabeiku kabuqinuo bingnaixi*, 2.5 yuan), a plastic pouch filled with refreshing, coffee-flavored crushed ice.

Other new products include a hazelnut-toffee flavor Drumstick (*huaxintong*, 4 yuan), and the kid-targeted Wonder Cup (*qiqi*, 4.5 yuan), a cup of vanilla ice cream that comes with figures from the Doraemon cartoon on top.

Photo provided by Nestle



Dumenchong

Photos by Zhou Xiaobo

Personal Classifieds

Accommodation

2 bedroom apartment near Dinghui Bridge, Haidian to let. Facing south, 64 square meters. Couples preferred. 1,650 yuan per month. Contact: Bill Shao, bill51886736@126.com

Professional Help

Seriously thinking of going overseas for study? One in four non-native English speaking freshmen at four-year Western colleges don't return for their sophomore year. But I can help you prepare with private tutoring. Contact: rknchn@yahoo.com

Established Hollywood writer/producer looking for English writer in Beijing to help developing on-going projects. Candidate must speak Chinese, have lived in China for at least three years with writing sample on features/drama. Send resume and 15-20 page sample to Diana@silverdreamprods.com

A certificated interpreter and experienced teacher available to teach English and Chinese, as well as do some translation and interpretation. Contact: 6475 6235, email: bear208cncn@yahoo.com.cn

Language Exchange

A Chinese girl, with good command of English and a little knowledge of French, is looking for native English/French speakers as language partners. She likes reading, traveling, folk music, chatting. Contact: jiangzhe77@sina.com

Maggie, a young mother and a native Beijinger, is looking for a mature and humorous language-exchange friend. Hope we can enjoy this wonderful city together.

Contact:
13717726159

English and Chinese tutor. English major, key university, returned from overseas, spoken English for grown-ups. Contact: Shao, 5188 6736

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The Way We Laughed

Directed by Gianni Amelio. It's the late 1950s. Two brothers have emigrated from Sicily. The older works hard to help the younger study and free himself from poverty. The boy, however, is not keen on school and wants to work. When he finally gets his degree, things take a violent and dramatic turn. Starring Enrico Lo Verso and Francesco Giuffrida. In Italian with English subtitles.

Where: Italian Embassy, 2 Dong'erjie, Sanlitun, Chaoyang **When:** 7:30 pm, March 17 **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6532 2187

That Is the Point

The story revolves around the confusion between a dog named Bobby and a gangster with the same name, and a series of confusions that arise as a result. This was the film that made Cantinflas one of Mexico's greatest stars, with a great story, as well as a great cast that includes Joaquin Pardave and Sofia Alvarez. With its hilarious

dialogue, this is easily one of the best films ever made in Mexico. Directed by Juan Bustillo Oro.

Where: Mexican Embassy, 5 Sanlitun Dongjie **When:** 7:30 pm, March 16 **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6532 2244



Peacock

Award-winning photographer and cinematographer Gu Changwei's directorial debut is *Peacock*, a coming-of-age story of three children in a working-class family living in a small city in the late 1970s. Gu worked as a cinematographer on *Red Sorghum*, *Ju*

Exhibitions

Sculptures
by Tian
Shixin

Born in Beijing in 1941, Tian Shixin spent time teaching fine arts in the mountains of southwest China and is renowned for his sculptures of historical figures like Sima Qian, Tan Sitong, Qiu Jin and Lu Xun - all marked by a heavy and solemn feel, no doubt influenced by his time in the mountains.

Where: Qin Gallery, 1-1 E Enjoy Paradise, Huaweili, North of Beijing Curio City, Chaoyang **When:** daily 9:30 am - 7 pm until March 17 **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8779 0461

Put it in Your Pocket

Pocket Music magazine, your local authority on Chinese music, brings their own collection of live acts to the stage. Acts not yet decided, but rest assured, Koudai Yinyue is reputed to be the link to the best of the best in China's indie music scene.

Where: 13 Club, 161 Chengfulu Lanqiying, Haidian **When:** 9:30 pm, Saturday **Admission:** 30 yuan **Tel:** 8262 8077

Movies

Dou and *Farewell my Concubine*. *Peacock* is a slated to be entered into the 2005 Berlin Film Festival. Starring Zhang Jingchu.

Where: Cherry Lane Movies Theater, 29 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang **When:** 8 pm, tonight and Saturday **Admission:** 50 yuan **Tel:** 13501251303

Double Zero

Directed by Gerard Pires, starring Eric Judor, Ramzy Bedia and Edouard Baer. The French secret service needs to recruit two civilians as decoys to distract a villain known as Le Male, who is attempting global domination, so the real agents can have a chance to catch him. They recruit Ben and Will and send them on a mission to recover a powerful French nuclear missile that was hijacked by Le Male.

Where: UME International Cineplex, (Huaxing Guoji Yingcheng), 44 Kexueyuan Nanlu, Shuangyushu, Haidian **When:** from today **Tel:** 8211 5566

Performances



The Well of the Saints

Graduates of the Central Academy of Drama present Irish playwright JM Synge's famous work *The Well of the Saints*. The story concerns two married, blind beggars who get a chance to finally see the world, and each

other, when a wandering holy man gives them sight. A tragic, funny and complex study of the conflict between illusion and reality. Directed by Yang Ting.

Where: Beijing North Theater, Beibingmasi Hutong, 67 Jiadaokou Nandajie, Dongcheng **When:** 7:30 pm, till April 3 **Admission:** 40-180 yuan **Tel:** 6404 8021

Symphonies by Chinese Female Composers

The China Philharmonic Orchestra presents a few female composers' works, including the symphonic poem *Demon in Kekexili* by Li Yiding from Beijing, *Six-Wing Angel* by He Bingyi from Canada, *Fenmo Dengchang* by Su Fanling from Taipei and more. Conducted by Li Xincao.

Where: Beijing Concert Hall, 1 Beixinhuanjie, Xicheng **When:** 7:30 pm, March 12 **Admission:** 180-580 yuan **Tel:** 6605 2404

Day to Day Life -
Paintings by Yang
Jinsong

The oils of Yang Jinsong evoke a reality that is both believable and abstract. His affinity for everyday objects and his cartoon-like representations of people and things are pleasant and inspiring.

Where: Beijing Art Now Gallery, Beijing Workers' Stadium, opposite Gate No. 12, Chaoyang **When:** daily 11 am - 7 pm until April 11 (closed on Mondays) **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6551 1632

Huang Haiyan Oil
Paintings Exhibition

A solo exhibition of oil paintings by Huang Haiyan, who is devoted to looking at the particulars of Beijing women surrounded by urban sprawl. He focuses his attention on characters with personality and tries to capture traces of modern femininity.

Where: New Millennium Art Gallery, 2/F Diyang Building, 2 Dongsanhuan Beilu, Chaoyang **When:** daily 9 am - 5 pm, until March 31 **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8453 6193

Group Exhibition: Qin
Artists

Contemporary oils by Pang Yongjie, Li qiang, Feng Feng and Luo Qi. Are they stylized jugglers, acrobats, or everyday people? They bear striking resemblance to the original Pinocchio by C. Collodi.

Where: Qin Gallery, 1-1 E Enjoy Paradise, Huaweili, North of Beijing Curio City, Chaoyang **When:** daily 9:30 am - 7 pm, until March 31 **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8779 0461

tending you didn't go to Catholic school? Dragonfly Events hopes so, that's why they are putting on a "Back to School" disco. They even encourage bad behavior, with promises of no detention! Expect funky and Latin house, trance and something called "twisted disco." Do not forget that uniform!

Where: D-Power, 8 Chaoyang Park Xilu, Chaoyang **When:** 10 pm, March 18 **Admission:** 50 yuan **Tel:** 6593 8888

Jams



Back to School

Feel like putting on your old school uniform and pre-

Activities

Chinese Culture Club (CCC):
Backstreet Beijing Walking Tour
- Xinjiekou and Huguosi

This area is known for its traditional Beijing snack shops and restaurants, the People's Theater, a Yuan Dynasty temple, the Chinese Opera Troupe rehearsal hall and the beautiful courtyard memorial for the famous Peking opera master Mei Lanfang. An expert will guide us through the memorial. You will have chances to try baked sesame cakes with donkey meat and other typical snacks as well as visit some little handicraft shops and CD stores with huge collections of traditional music and the latest hits from all over the world.

Where: Meet at the CCC (29 Anjialou, Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang) at 10 am **When:** March 15 **Cost:** 100 yuan (includes transportation and Mei Lanfang Memorial ticket) **Tel:** 6432 9341 (Reservation essential)

Service

African Adventures

Africa's marvelous wildlife won't be present, but everything else from the continent - from food to dress - will be at Pili Pili's African Food Night. The spouses of African ambassadors will team up with representatives of African embassies to teach the intricacies of cookery and costume. Buffet dinner priced at 150 yuan with all proceeds going to a women and children's charity.

Where: Pili Pili African Restaurant & Bar, Oriental Qicai World, near Nurenjie, Chaoyang **When:** March 18 **Tel:** 8448 3372

TV and Radio Highlights

HBO

11 Friday

The Devil's Own	9 pm
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12 Saturday

Intolerable Cruelty	9 pm
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13 Sunday

Kazaam	8 pm
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14 Monday

Freddy VS. Jason	9 pm
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15 Tuesday

The Phantom	10:50 pm
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16 Wednesday

The Cat's Meow	9 pm
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17 Thursday

Identity	9 pm
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CCTV-9

Monday - Friday

Around China	6:30 am
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Culture Express	8:30 am
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Nature and Science /

Chinese Civilization	11:30 am
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Culture Express	2:30 pm
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Nature and Science /

Chinese Civilization	5:30 pm
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Dialogue	7:30 pm
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News Updates /

Asia Today	8 pm
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Sports Scene	11:15 pm
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Saturday

Travelogue	9:30 am
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Center Stage	11:30 am
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Sunday

Sports Weekend	10 am
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Documentary	10:30 am
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This Week	12:30 am
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China Radio International 91.5 FM

Monday - Friday

Easy FM Afternoon	2-7 pm
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Fun in Beijing	5-5:30 pm
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Joy FM	9:05-11 pm
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Saturday

Music Memories	8:05-11 am
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Euro Hit 40	12:05-1 pm
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Musique Sans Frontières	6:05-8 pm
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Joy FM	9:05-11 pm
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Sunday

Music Memories	8:05-11 am
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Jazz Beat	6:05-8 pm
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Joy FM	9:05-11 pm
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We are glad to receive your feedback. We will print employment, language-exchange and accommodation information for individuals. Feel free to email us at bjtodayinfo@ynet.com or call 6590 2518

By Zhang Jianzhong

Walk in a Tujia Village

The cloud covered mountain areas of southwest Hunan and Hubei and northeast Guizhou are the home of China's Tujia ethnic minority, famous for their 'hanging houses' and colorful woven cloth.

By Hester Xu and Arron Chang
The Tujia, one of China's 55 ethnic minorities, number around 5 million in population, and boast a history of some 2,000 years, with a rich, vibrant culture.

Ancient town of Ming and Qing
Located in the rural outskirts of Chongqing, the town of Xituo was called Xijietuo in the past, and known as the "western boundary of Bazhou County," due to its proximity to Huishuituo, on the south bank of the Yangtze River.

The history of Xituo can be traced back more than 2,000 years, however most of the buildings standing today were constructed during the Ming and Qing dynasties. An important deepwater port on the upper reaches of the Yangtze throughout history, the town saw its peak of prosperity during the mid Qing dynasty.

The town itself rises up almost vertically from the water, leveling out high above the bank. From the waterfront beneath, the town can be reached by way of a zig-zag stone stair carved into the cliff with more than 1,000 steps. Locals call it the "stair that leads to the sky."

Climbing the stone steps, with rows of hanging houses on either side, one passes the remains of the ancient Purple-Cloud Palace, Ten Thousand Skies Palace and Sweet-Scented Osmanthus Palace. Inside the town, visitors can see some well-preserved brickwork from Han dynasty and some rare tree fossils dating back to the last Ice Age. A new stair of blue stone has been built beside the old one, making access to the town from the river significantly easier.

Getting there:

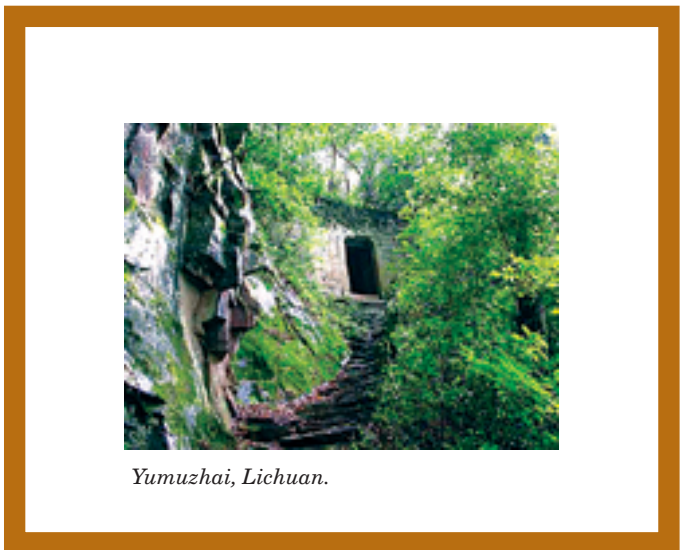
Take the shuttle bus from Chaotianmen Station in Chongqing, which goes directly to Xituo Town. It costs 50-60 yuan for the six-hour trip.

Xuanen in southwest Hubei Province

By the south-west border of Hubei Province, Xuanen perches on the extended part of the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau. Originally called Bingjun Kingdom, it was known as Bazi Kingdom during the Spring and Autumn Period. The current name was given during the rule of emperor Qianlong in the Qing Dynasty,



Longtan, Chongqing.



Yumuzhai, Lichuan.



Zhangjiajie, Sichuan.

and means "to bestow benefits by the emperor."

A total of 24 ethnic minority groups live in Xuanen and the surrounding areas, but the majority of the population are Tujia.

Hanging houses in Peng family village

Peng family village lies south of Xuanen, adjacent to Hunan Province. On the mountain slope behind the town is a lush bamboo forest. Some 250 Tujia people, all surnamed Peng, live in the village as 45 families. What gives the village a special flavor is its well-preserved hanging houses and the culture and customs the local people have preserved for generations.

Hot bed in Xiaoguan Zhangguan

Also known as the Cheng Family Courtyard, Xiaoguan Zhangguan has a history of more than 200 years. The "heated" bed is typical of traditional Tujia life. With a hollow space for hot coals inside, the bed doubles as a cooking stove and place for smoking meat.

Historic shopping streets

The Qingyang Pavilion Shopping streets were built during the reign of Qing Emperor Qianlong. Situated between a narrow creek and mountainside, the streets are divided into "three streets and 12 alleys."

Some 500 people now live in the 65 houses on the well kept streets. Most houses have two or three storeys with a structure of "five columns and four beams" or "eight columns and seven beams." Each house has a wooden trough under the eaves in front for water drainage and is connected to the neighboring houses, forming a roofed corridor that provide shelter from inclement weather.

The first floor of the houses are used as shops and the second floor as the living area. The houses on the north side of the main street straddle a small creek. In the middle section of these houses is a pavilion bridge. The bridge serves as a passageway for local people to get to the shopping streets.

White tiger cult

The fabled white tiger has a special significance for the Tujia people. They even refer to themselves as "offspring of the white tiger." According to a Tujia legend, Bawuxiang was elected as chief of the five Tujia tribes

and was given the name Linjun. Traveling down the river on an earthen boat, Linjun arrived in Yanyang and killed the vicious Goddess of Yanyang, allowing his people settle there. When Linjun died, his soul turned into a tiger and went to heaven. Since then, the Tujia have worshiped Linjun, and his tiger soul.

Every household enshrines a carved wooden white tiger in his memory. During Tujia wedding ceremonies, the groom's family would put a tiger blanket on a large square table in the main hall to symbolize a sacrifice to Lijun.

Images of the white tiger can be also seen in the everyday life of Tujia people. Their ancient warriors went to war holding swords and dagger-axes decorated with carved emblems in the shape of a tiger head, children wear tiger hats, tiger shoes and sleep in a "tiger foot" quilt, doorframes are carved with white tigers and doorknobs are cast in the shape of a tiger head.

The Tujia people believe the strengths of the tiger can dispel evil and bring peace and happiness.

Maogusi dance

The maogusi dance, or babuchang in Tujia dialect, means "elder man." It is an ancient dance that the Tujia use to commemorate their ancestors' achievements, such as opening up new lands, fishing and hunting. It has a unique and simple style and is performed during the new year.

The dance requires 15 or so people. The leading man is the oldest man in the village, called "babuchang," the rest are members of the same family. All dancers are wrapped in rice straw, dried grass and tree leaves. Even their faces are covered with rice straw and tree leaves. To their heads are tied five big palm tree leaves. When performing *Receiving the Bride*, each male dancer wears a penis made from rice straw dangling between his legs.

Both the movements and content of the Maogusi dance are unique to the Tujia. Speaking and singing in the local dialect, the dancers walk in small steps, bending their knees, shaking their bodies, waving their heads and shrugging their shoulders throughout the performance, while the straw and tree leaves rustle on their body.

Some maogusi dance performances can last for six nights.

Telling the story of Tujia history, fishing and hunting, marriage and work, the dance embodies a primeval form of worship-drama that incorporates elements of song, dance and spoken word.

Dancing funeral

The Tujia keep the tradition of burying the dead, but their funerals are extremely lively, in keeping with the philosophy of "sending the dead away joyfully and holding the funeral happily."

When an elderly villager dies, the family invites drummers to beat the funeral drums. Throughout the night, the *suona* horns blare, the drums and gongs break out from time to time and firecrackers explode. In the mourning hall, each dancer holds one instrument and is directed by the drum master. When the drums are beaten, dancers begin to sing and dance in groups, following the rhythm of the drumbeat.

Xilankapu

Also referred to as "woven color cloth bedding," *xilankapu* is a woven cloth. According to Tujia custom, girls begin learning how to weave colored cloth while in their teens. Girls must weave their own bedding as a dowry for their wedding.

According to a Tujia legend, a clever and deft girl weaved a xilankapu cloth with 100 kinds of flowers. But her sister in law envied her. Accusing her of meeting her boyfriend secretly during the night and thus discrediting the family, she incited her brother to kill her. When the news of her death reached the village, the other girls missed her so much that they named the cloth she made "weaving color cloth bedding" and began the tradition of using it as their dowry.

Xilankapu is hand woven, the warps are made of dark colored silk thread and the patterns are created with thick silk, cotton or wool thread. They are typically brightly colored and feature patterns such as natural scenery, animals, furniture, flowers and grass, geometric patterns, as well as traditional Chinese characters such as "happiness" and "luck."

Nuoxi drama

Originally part of the Tujia ceremony of worshiping and redeeming a vow to the gods, Nuoxi drama incorporates the form of drama, music and dance. It is most famous for the exaggerated facial masks and costumes worn by the performers, and the humorous lyrics.

Typical Tujia style houses in Badong, Chongqing